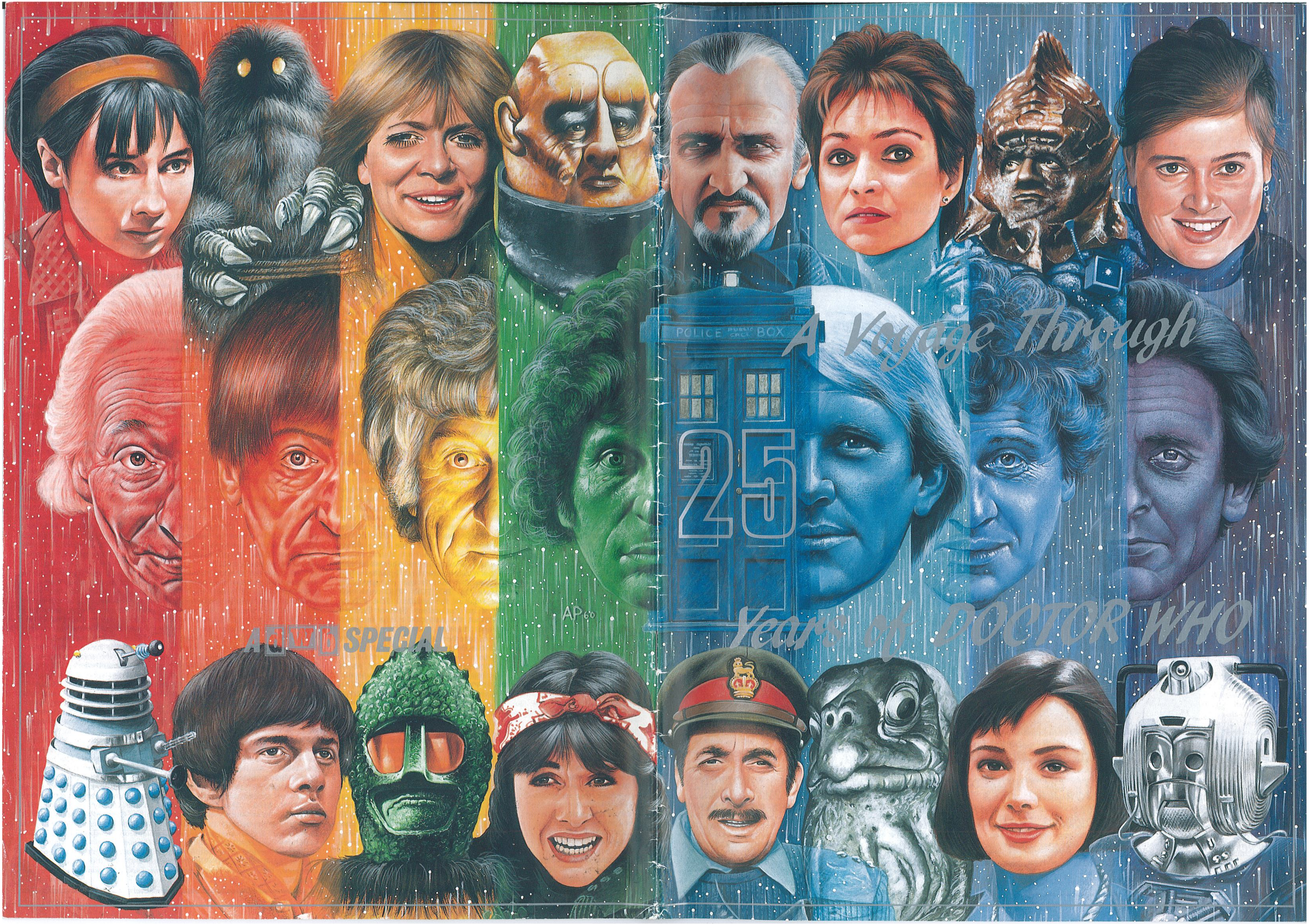
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A Voyage Through 25 Years of DOCTOR WHO

A dwb SPECIAL

INTRODUCTION

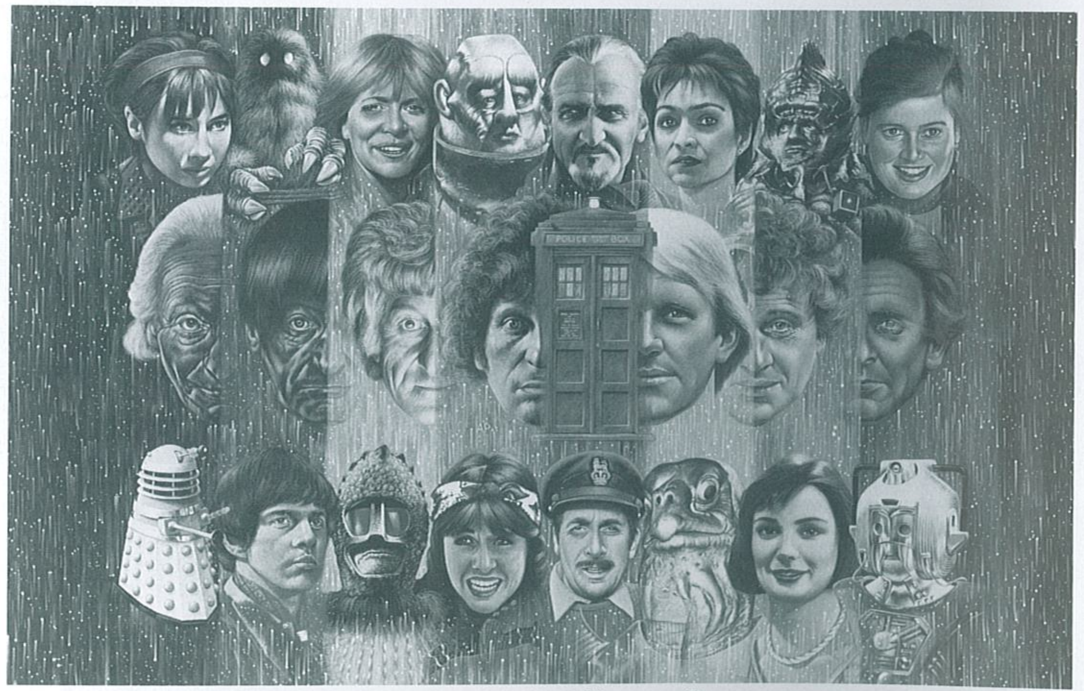
HOW DOES A FANZINE possibly do justice to a world-famous television institution celebrating its twentififth year of existence ? The truth is, it can't, but by devoting an issue consisting solely of contributions from its most ardent of followers (ie: the fans!), it can at least hope to come near to fathoming the secret behind the unique magic that has kept it on our screens, through thick and thin.

No amount of flashy photographs or probing interviews could convey the assortment of personal recollections herein, as twenty-five of the more 'well-known' fans - some old, some new - rekindle their memories of a quarter of a century of DOCTOR WHO. In selecting their choice of season, each writer was simply told to "Go away and get on with it", with no brief imposed on them whatsoever. What has resulted, I hope, is a diverse range of opinions, some of which you will agree with, and some, undoubtedly, you won't, but they are personal recollections and an attempt at explaining the attraction behind the concept for which we all share a common interest.

And that, surely, is what matters...

GARY LEVY (5th December, 1988)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: The editor wishes to thank everyone who agreed to participate in the making of this Silver Anniversary volume, especially Alister Pearson for his painstaking and splendid work on the cover, and; John Ainsworth, Peter Anghelides, J.Jeremy Bentham, Nicholas Briggs, Bruce Campbell, Paul Cornell, Andrew Evans, Gavin French, Craig Hinton, Antony Howe, David Howe, Dallas Jones, Julian Knott, Ian Levine, Simon Lydiard, Dominic May, Ian McLachlan, David Owen, Justin Richards, Gary Russell, David Saunders, Stephen James Walker, Jonathan Way and Martin Wiggins.



COVER painted by Alister Pearson
CONCEPT by Alister Pearson and Gary Levy

THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO THE HUNDREDS OF PRODUCTION PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN THE MAKING OF 'DOCTOR WHO' OVER THE YEARS - THE ACTORS, PRODUCERS, DIRECTORS, FLOOR CREW... - AND PARTICULARLY TO SYDNEY NEWMAN AND VERITY LAMBERT FOR PROVIDING THAT VITAL INITIAL SPARK OF INSPIRATION.

PROCEEDS from sales of this publication will be donated to the supported charities of the recently sadly-departed Robert Holmes, Ian Marter and Dennis Spooner (to be announced in a forthcoming issue of DWB).

SEASON 1 (1963/64)
by Jeremy Bentham

THERE IS NO ESCAPING the compulsive draw of good melodrama. Perfected by the Victorians for their gas-lit auditoriums, melodrama offers a stylised form of reality, a depiction of eras - past or present - that while close enough to observable history, embellish their texts with romantic notions and designer picture weavings of times that never quite were.

In stage melodrama, where the art form developed, some images are deliberately exaggerated to convey their qualities to the distant audience. An eccentric professor, for instance, is demonstrably an eccentric professor - complete with wild, flowing hair, gleaming eyes and a code of dress completely outside the norm of his contemporaries. Conversely, other images are deliberately toned down or ignored altogether, so that those of poorer origin, at whom melodrama was principally aimed, could find an escape valve from the harsher, grimier realities of their surrounding lives.

As the decades wore on, first cinema, then radio and finally television adopted the motifs of melodrama, using them as consistently effective hooks to draw audiences into a mood it did not necessarily require a big budget to achieve. Rathbone's Sherlock Holmes stalking hounds on Grimpen Mire; the sepulchral tones of Valentine Dyall's Man in Black; even dear old George Dixon, shining his policeman's torch along the mist-bound backstreets of Dock Green, were but shield carriers of a story-telling medium dating back more than a century.

And so it was that **DOCTOR WHO** began its epic odyssey by pinching the raw stuff of melodrama. Sydney Newman may have intended more allegorical science-fiction à la H.G.Wells, but under the script-guiding hand of David Whitaker, what emerged was a romanticised production, somewhere between 'Boys Own Weekly' and C.S.Lewis. Unashamedly melodramatic images and symbols were borrowed from proven sources, most notably beginning the adventure in a stylised present day, thereby giving the audience an identifiable starting point in "reality" from which the step into the unknown could be taken.

C.S.Lewis wrote of a wardrobe, through whose doors Edmund, Peter, Susan and Lucy could cross time and space from 1940s England into the magical world of Narnia. In similar vein **DOCTOR WHO**'s creative team devised the TARDIS, an equally fantastical bridge to worlds and eras that were beyond the 20th Century, and yet symbolically always linked to the comforting safety of 'home' by its solidly reassuring shape as one of George Dixon's police phone boxes.

A point to ponder, when considering this link to an identifiable present is the amusing notion of the BBC switching its schedules on November 23rd 1963 so that **DOCTOR WHO** followed, rather than preceded, Ted Willis' audience-winning story of everyday policemen. Did George Dixon say "Goodnight all" just as another of his colleagues, some miles away, was passing the gates of a derelict junkyard ? Who is to say...

Certainly the first quarter hour of **An Unearthly Child** fills every important moment with the important task of introducing and establishing sympathy with two Earthbound leads, Ian and Barbara. Relentlessly the camera follows them as we are affirmed of their position as ordinary, everyday people, made even more identifiable to **DOCTOR WHO**'s target audience by pitching them as teachers. Every school boy and girl in early Sixtie's Britain knew a Mr. Chesterton or a Miss Wright, and, chances are, knew them well enough to feel for their plight when suddenly confronted with an extra-terrestrial vehicle, piloted by a mysterious figure who would become, in quick succession, their tormentor, their kidnapper and ultimately their guide.

The man of mystery was the other big hook that pulled viewers into **DOCTOR WHO**'s web of intrigue. Who was this enigmatic stranger stalking the night in clothes of another age ? Why had he come to Earth in the first place ? And would he turn out to be a villain, as far as his hijacked fellow voyagers were concerned ?

To the credit of all the first season script-writers, as well as to William Hartnell himself, the Doctor's air of mystery and aloofness persisted throughout year one, surviving even the gentle mollifying of his character that occurred after the **Edge of Destruction** story. By the time of **The Sensorites** the Doctor was indelibly tagged as a goodie, but so strong was the image fostered by his introduction, that his imperious and unchallenged aura of leadership through respect survived even through farcical later episodes like **The Romans.** Indeed it is intriguing to question how much stronger that impression would be had the series begun with the rewritten introduction Whitaker penned for his 1964 novel, **DOCTOR WHO and the Daleks.** To have had the Doctor emerging through the night fog like Hamlet's ghost, bathed in the pale white light of an "everlasting match", would have been a powerful cinematic visual of the calibre unleashed frequently and successfully by Hammer Films to establish the menace of Christopher Lee's Dracula; a likewise stalker of the night in a rich, red-lined opera cape...

Remarkably this atmosphere of strangeness and disturbing mystery survived the transition from the popular melodramatic scenario of nocturnal backstreet London to the less popular (with film-makers) bleak daytime landscape of a freezing paleolithic Earth. Recollecting her early days on **DOCTOR WHO,** Verity Lambert is adamant she would not have premièred the show with **The Tribe of Gum** had she been in the producer's seat during the initial stages of production. Nevertheless, despite restrictions of budget, studio size, guest cast and the narrative necessity of having cavemen speaking at least recognisably 20th Century English, the taut, close-up favouring, tightly-angled camera direction of Waris Hussein invested the followers of Orb with eerie, non-human qualities that were every bit as blood-chilling as what was to follow.

And what followed, of course, were the Daleks. Despite Sydney Newman's reservations, the Daleks were an example of inspired design brilliance, their effectiveness a credit to all who worked on, or worked with them, on that first landmarking serial. The key elements in their creation - the Nation/Whitaker script and the Cusick/Shawcraft design - are obvious. But of no lesser importance were the tripartite efforts of Brian Hodgson, Ray Angel and Peter Hawkins to provide an innovative voice for the creatures, plus the totally believable inter-reaction of the cast with the Daleks, and all of this photographed with imaginative flair by directors Christopher Barry and Richard Martin.

Although many factors blended to forge the Daleks' unprecedented overnight hit, a prime element in their - and in **DOCTOR WHO**'s - favour was that they did not follow the clichéd trend of science-fiction monsters to lurch out of shadows, making guttural growls as they carry off the screaming heroine. In fact all three of the season's main monsters/aliens had a defined logic to their appearance and behaviour. The Daleks were decayed war survivors inside protective casings; the Sensorites (such as we saw them) were a race of elderly, pontificating thinkers; even the Voord, the first season's closest nod towards traditional men-in-rubber-suits monsters, were rubber-suited precisely because they were amphibious-borne commandos, protecting their true and never-seen bodies with vulcanised oversuits against the corrosive power of the acid sea.

The over-riding aim of the first season, however, came across not as a wonder-filled opportunity to explore "strange new worlds", nor as a noble quest to defeat powers of evil. The essence of it was simply a fearful wish to get back home. Although odd by today's standards, the Doctor in Season One was not the hub around which the action revolved. He was important to the situations, yes, vital even; but the mainstays of the narrative were always its two human characters, Ian and Barbara. Again borrowing from the rich sources of the past, the first season manœuvred itself around a quest saga: the prize being to return the TARDIS' lost passengers to Earth 1963.

To make this work week in week out for a year, devices had to be found to keep viewers on the edges of their seats and concerned about Ian and Barbara's welfare and safety.

The stratagem evolved was almost a board game. 'Home' was the TARDIS, a vehicle invulnerable to attack and both sanctuary for the travellers as well as a means to moving on, perhaps to the green pastures of Earth... But, once away from home, the four players had to go round the board at least once before landing up at the TARDIS again. And to prevent any premature returns or escapes, elaborate plot traps were set to prevent this in all but one of the first eight serials. In some cases the barrier might be physical - a force field or a stone wall. In other instances the onus to stay might be the recovery of a missing piece of TARDIS equipment: a fluid link, the ship's keys or even the whole lock mechanism. Other times the sheer distance of miles would be the barring factor.

Elaborating on this plot 'McGuffin' **Marco Polo** went one step further and actually allowed the travellers limited access to the ship from time to time. Would they or wouldn't they escape this time, teased writer John Lucarotti. At the end of episode five it looked like it would happen; the TARDIS key is retrieved, the Doctor opens the door, Ian and Barbara rush in, the ship is readied for flight...but no. From out of the shadows Tegana steps forth to halt Susan in her race to safety. The audience is confounded and left to wait another week for the next roll of the dice.

If fault is to be found with the structure of the first season, it is the role of Susan. Although brilliantly conceived as the unearthly child who draws the hapless teachers into the machiavellian power of the Doctor, she is rarely thereafter allowed the centre stage attention alternated between the other three. Ian gets his chance to shine principally in the historicals, crossing swords verbally in **Marco Polo** and, more literally, in **The Reign of Terror** and **The Aztecs.** Barbara's talents, on the other hand, rise to magnificence in times of confrontation; haranguing the Doctor for his "saboteur" accusations in **The Edge of Destruction,** or outwitting the high priest Tlotoxl in **The Aztecs.** But, while the good Doctor is equally at home playing every mood from cantankerous petulance to regal superiority, Susan is often left with just the screaming or the getting-into-danger scenes. Even in **The Sensorites,** where her telepathic powers are brought ot the fore, Susan's 'raison d´être' stays mainly as a link between plot situations; narrating the storyline and explaining the Sensorites' point of view without actually ever contributing much towards advancing the narrative. Eventually even the writers get bored - bundling her away in a cupboard (**The Keys of Marinus**), locking her in prison (**The Reign of Terror**), or shunting her off to a seminary for half a story (**The Aztecs**).

In all fairness, though, Susan is more than the cipher some of her successors would become. Carole Ann Ford's looks are startlingly compelling and her non-vocal acting ability considerable as the disturbing scenes of her armed with a pair of long scissors proved in **The Edge of Destruction.** But three's company, four's a crowd, as later producers and script-editors would find, and it is solely due to the acting talents of the early TARDIS incumbents that the strain of finding things for four people to do was kept virtually invisible to the viewers at home.

Originally year one of **DOCTOR WHO** was to have closed with **The Dalek Invasion of Earth,** but the show's deserved success rapidly earned an urgent mandate for a second season. Husbanding her resources, Verity Lambert rescheduled transmission of the last two stories to make them time-savers for year two - hastily inserting a slightly artificial end to **The Reign of Terror** with Hartnell's "...destiny in the stars" monologue presumably in preference to going out on a cliff-hanger unanswered for several weeks. It can only be left to speculation, then, as to how greater might the audience have been for **Planet of Giants** had **The Reign of Terror** ended with a blaring alarm and the unimagionable sight of the TARDIS doors opening in flight...

SEASON 2 (1964/65)

by Stephen James Walker

SEASON TWO is one of those seasons that hasn't always received as much attention and consideration as it really deserves. Perhaps this is because it has tended to be overshadowed by the sheer brilliance of Season One. Certainly it isn't quite as outstanding as that debut batch of stories; but, on the other hand, it is more experimental and arguably more daring, making much fuller use of the incredibly flexible format with which DOCTOR WHO is blessed.

The opening two stories, **Planet of Giants** and **The Dalek Invasion of Earth,** were actually made in the first recording block and could easily have been transmitted as part of Season One itself had they not been held back to give producer Verity Lambert and her team more breathing space in their schedules.

Planet of Giants, written by Louis Marks, has two basic plot strands: first, the Doctor and his three companions - Susan, Ian and Barbara - are reduced to only one inch in height when the TARDIS malfunctions; secondly, in their reduced state they have to find a way of foiling an unscrupulous businessman who murders a civil servant to prevent him exposing the ecologically harmful nature of a new insecticide. While the miniaturisation idea works extremely well, mainly because of designer Raymond P Cusick's superb giant-sized sets and props - all built on a scale of 70:1 - the crime element is sadly much less successful, coming across like something out of a rather pedestrian 1950s 'B' movie, complete with the traditional village bobby. This is probably why the story, recorded as a four-parter, was edited down to only three episodes shortly before transmission.

While **Planet of Giants** must be deemed a partial failure, the same certainly cannot be said of **The Dalek Invasion of Earth,** which still ranks as one of the series' all-time greats. Terry Nations six-part script is impressive, presenting an action-packed good-versus-evil struggle in which our four heroes join up with a human resistance group to liberate the planet from the Dalek invaders. Admittedly Richard Martin's studio direction is a little clumsy in places, but this is more than made up for by his excellent location work - the first major use of location filming in **DOCTOR WHO** - which is very effective in helping to convey the impression of a Britain under the rule of the alien forces. The story can almost be seen as a "what if...?" depiction of how things might have turned out had the country been occupied during World War II, with the Daleks representing (as usual, in Terry Nation's writing) Adolph Hitler's Nazis; and it is all the more evocative for that.

The closing moments of **The Dalek Invasion of Earth** stand as an important landmark in **DOCTOR WHO** history since they feature the first departure of a companion - namely Susan, the Doctor's own grand-daughter. This is a poignant and moving scene, beautifully written by story editor David Whitaker, but it must have left many viewers wondering if the series could ever be quite the same again. Whitaker therefore had a very difficult task when he came to introduce Susan's replacement, Vicki, in the following story. Whitaker himself was on the point of leaving the series at this stage, so in the end his successor, Dennis Spooner, also ended up doing a fair amount of work on the scripts for this two-parter entitled **The Rescue.**

The story has often been dismissed as simply "the one that introduced Vicki", but this overlooks the fact that it is actually an excellent serial in its own right. Admittedly the plot - a rocket-ship crew-member disguising himself as a hostile native on the planet where it has crash-landed so as to conceal a murder he committed earlier in the flight - is a fairly simple one, as indeed it has to be bearing in mind that it needs to come to a resolution within a mere fifty minutes. Where this story really shines, though, is in its superb dialogue and characterisation, and its high production values. William Hartnell is in particularly fine form as the Doctor, bringing a gleeful enthusiasm and mischievous sense of humour to the part, while Jacqueline Hill and William Russell are as good as ever in their respective rôles as Barbara and Ian. Maureen O'Brien, too, gives a very creditable performance in her debut appearance as the young orphan girl Vicki (who, incidentally, was originally called Valerie and then Tanni before this name was settled upon). Much of the story's success is due to Christopher Barry's outstanding direction. The scenes where the Doctor confronts the murderer, Bennett, in the Didonian Hall of Judgment are especially tense and atmospheric, but there are many other memorable moments. All in all, a thoroughly enjoyable story - and a greatly underrated one.

Next in line comes **The Romans,** also directed by Christopher Barry. However, this is a very different style of production from its predecessor, taking the series off into the previously unexplored realms of comedy. It was actually Verity Lambert's idea to do a comedy-based **DOCTOR WHO,** rather than Dennis Spooner's; but the new story editor was certainly no stranger to this type of drama! The four-parter that he came up with is an amusing romp through Emperor Nero's Rome, drawing heavily on the traditions of farce but still having its serious moments, such as the scene where the slave-master Tavius is revealed as secretly being a Christian. In fact, viewed with the benefit of hindsight and judged purely on its own merits, **The Romans** is a thoroughly entertaining piece of television. Back in 1964, though, when it was the first **DOCTOR WHO** story of its kind, it certainly seemed a very radical departure. The depiction of Nero as a vain, comical oaf is in marked contrast to the serious, realistic portrayal of such historical figures as Marco Polo and Robespierre in the previous season; and it is somewhat difficult to come to terms with the Doctor engaging in near-slapstick fight sequences and reeling off a succession of excrutiating puns. In the final analysis, though, this represents a very worthwhile attempt at finding new dramatic ground for the series to cover.

The fifth story of the season, Bill Strutton's **Web Planet,** is also quite different from anything that has gone before, featuring what just might be the most interesting alien environment ever seen in **DOCTOR WHO.** This is the planet Vortis, where we encounter an incredible array of alien creatures: the Zarbi ants and their Venom Grubs; the moth-like Menoptra and their underground 'cousins', the Optera; and, lurking at the heart of its giant web, the evil Animus, which the Doctor and his friends must overcome in order to reclaim the planet for its rightful inhabitants. The designers really went to town on this story, producing some highly imaginative sets and costumes (and, in the process, going way over-budget!). Director Richard Martin makes the whole thing seem even more weird by such techniques as smearing Vaseline over the camera lenses for scenes set on the planet's surface, and adding a heavy echo to the characters' voices. The production does admittedly creak a little in places (both metaphorically and literally), but this is understandable given that the concepts involved are some of the most bold and original the series has ever attempted to present. Despite the minor flaws, it almost goes without saying that this six-parter is another of the all-time classics.

David Whitaker's **The Crusade** - his second contribution to the season, but his first as a fully freelance writer - is another magnificent story, well up to the standard of the brilliant Season One historicals. Eschewing the lighter approach of **The Romans,** Whitaker gives us a gripping account of King Richard the Lionheart's attempts to win peace during the Third Crusade by marrying his sister Joanna to Saphadin, brother of the Saracen ruler Saladin - and of our heroes' efforts to avoid getting caught up in a web of intrigue. One particularly noteworthy aspect of this colourful, vibrant four-parter is its superbly-crafted dialogue, which has led some people to dub it "the best play that Shakespeare never wrote"! That comparison might be a little wide of the mark, but director Douglas Camfield clearly treated the project with the seriousness it merited, and it is easy to see why he is now regarded by many people as the finest director ever to have worked on **DOCTOR WHO.** It is a tragedy that only one episode of this story now survives in the BBC Archives; especially as the other three were not sold very widely abroad for fear of offending Middle Eastern viewers, and hence are some of the least likely ever to be recovered.

Coming as it does after a run of truly wonderful episodes, **The Space Museum** is, it has to be said, something of a let-down. The spending excesses of **The Web Planet** meant that money had to be saved later in the season, and this fact is very apparent here. Of course, a low budget is by no means an insurmountable problem if the script is a good one; in this case, however, Glyn Jones' only written contribution to the series (he later appeared in front of the cameras in **The Sontaran Experiment**) is a rather dreary and lacklustre affair, involving a convoluted plot device whereby the Doctor and his companions have to alter their own futures in order to avoid being turned into exhibits in a museum run by the war-like Moroks. This is perhaps the only story in the entire Hartnell era where all of the supporting characters are, without exception, just plain **dull;** the only one that is in the least bit memorable is the Morok leader, Lobos. Even the four regulars seem to have trouble summoning up much enthusiasm for once and, despite having one or two good points, this is clearly the least successful story of the season.

Having said that, **The Chase** is unfortunately not much better. The Daleks are back for a further six Terry Nation-penned episodes, but this time the plot is nowhere near as strong as for their first two appearances. As the title implies, the story revolves around a chase - the Daleks pursuing the TARDIS through time and space in their own ship (referred to in the script as a 'DARDIS'!), with the aim of catching and killing the four travellers. The action moves from place to place, with each episode having a different setting from the previous one (or, in some cases, more than one setting), and in that sense it is similar to Nation's Season One story **The Keys of Marinus.** Where **The Chase** falls down in comparison with that earlier epic though is in the nature of its settings, which are mostly rather too jokey, ranging from an apparently haunted house (in reality an exhibition inhabited by androids!) to the deck of the Marie Celeste to the top of New York's Empire State Building. Not only that, but the Daleks themselves are not always treated entirely seriously here; in fact, there seems to be a tendency to want to send them up! (In fairness to Terry Nation, these aspects were almost certainly introduced by Dennis Spooner.)

What saves the whole story from being classed as ignominious failure is the final episode, and more specifically the action-packed battle between the Daleks and their new rivals, the robotic Mechanoids (another excellent Raymond Cusick design). These are the scenes that everyone remembers from **The Chase,** and in truth there is little else to recommend it. It is, however, noteworthy for one other reason: like the previous Dalek story, it ends with a change in the regular line-up of characters. This time, it is Ian and Barbara who depart, to be replaced by the young astronaut Steven Taylor, played by Peter Purves.

It is probably fair to say that William Russell and Jacqueline Hill chose just about the right time to go. By this stage, it was becoming clear that they had really done all they could with their respective characters; had they stayed any longer they might have become stale. In deciding to bring in just one new companion to replace them, rather than trying to come up with direct substitutes as had happened, in a sense, when Carole Ann Ford left, the production team broke the 'four regulars' mould and established a new 'one girl, one boy' set-up that would become the norm (with one brief exception when Jamie joined) for many years to come.

Steven's first journey with the Doctor and Vicki takes him to tenth century England in Dennis Spooner's four-part story **The Time Meddler.** Here, Spooner strikes a nice balance between comedy and serious drama, part-way between the opposite extremes of **The Romans** and **The Crusade.** This is not an out-and-out historical, though; rather, it is the first of the genre that would later become known as the 'pseudo-historicals', and hence another new direction for the series to explore. The anachronistic elements in this case are provided courtesy of the Meddling Monk; a renegade member of the Doctor's own race who is engaged in a mischievous scheme to destroy a Viking fleet about to do battle with King Harold, thus allowing Harold to win the Battle of Hastings. With the exception of Susan, this is the first time in **DOCTOR WHO** that we have encountered another Time Lord (although they were not named as such until five years later), and it is a further indication of just how ground-breaking **The Time Meddler** really is. In plot terms, on the other hand, it is actually a fairly modest story; but it is nonetheless enjoyable for that. Peter Butterworth, in an excellent performance as the Monk, provides a particularly good foil for Hartnell's Doctor - and it rounds off the season in fine style.

Overall, then, Season Two presents an interesting diversity of stories in a wide range of styles. Some are natural extensions of what has gone before in Season One, while others are more experimental, exploring new dramatic territory and, at times, stretching the series' format to its limits. It has to be said that these experiments are not always entirely successful; but that is in the nature of experiments, and it doesn't necessarily mean that they aren't worthwhile. Where the season **does** succeed, it does so splendidly, with the major highlights being, I think, **The Dalek Invasion of Earth, The Web Planet** and **The Crusade.** So, while it might not be quite as consistent as Season One, Season Two is an excellent collection of stories in its own right; and it deserves to be recognised as such.

SEASON 3 (1965/66)

by Ian Levine

IT WAS A PARTICULAR HONOUR to be able to choose a season that I most wanted to review. Out of twenty-five seasons of DOCTOR WHO, Season Three is by far and away my favourite.

I became fanatical about DOCTOR WHO as an impressionable ten-year-old from the very first story, so much so that by the time it had reached **The Edge of Destruction** I used to sit down at the end of each episode for two hours intricately detailing everything that had happened in an exercise book. By the time the show reached Season Three my fanaticism had reached a massive scale and I was now making off-air audio recordings.

No **DOCTOR WHO** story has ever made the same impression on me as **The Daleks' Master Plan.** I remember after the first episode writing in my exercise book "Something very special above and beyond the normal **DOCTOR WHO** story" - an epic panorama was unfolding before our eyes. By the final episode, The Destruction of Time, I was quaking in my seat in terror at the scenario that had led up to Sara Kingdom withering up into a skeleton.

So, an overall look at Season Three, one of the most unjustly maligned seasons of **DOCTOR WHO** ever, yet one which contained some of the most varied and wonderfully innovative stories over no less than two changes of producer; from Verity Lambert to John Wiles who subsequently handed over the reins after a short time to Innes Lloyd. John Wiles has often since recounted his frustrations of the time in trying to get William Hartnell to accept the ideas of a new regime. However, it was his desire to make it more adult, with more far-fetched fantasy, which made **The Daleks' Master Plan** the classic that it was. It is quite possible that Verity Lambert, a great producer though she was, would not have turned it into quite the classic that it became under her successor.

John Wiles' attempt to change the series' direction - yet his frustration at being saddled with a 12-part Dalek story - led to it becoming **more** than a Dalek story and more of a space opera, spanning many different locations with many tense moments throughout. John Wiles was fortunate in that his script editor, Donald Tosh, shared his desire to take the series away from the average-type **DOCTOR WHO** story into something a little more intellectual. **DOCTOR WHO** had always been great up to this point, anyway, but here it was something special.

The season began, after the summer gap before which which last seen the Doctor defeating the Meddling Monk and the wonderful closing sequence with the three time travellers' faces merged into the time/space vortex, with **Galaxy Four,** a sadly 'forgotten' story, which although not an epic classic, still yielded some great moments. The Chumblies were an interesting creation, leaning a little towards the Daleks in terms of design, and yet were not the main element of the story. What fascinated me at the time had been really appreciating the tense drama of the revelation at the end of episode two of the Rill hiding behind a frosted glass partition, bearing in mind that in this story you never actually saw a Rill properly until the end of episode four. Up to that episode all you saw were teasing opaque shadows of a grotesque-looking creature looking a little like a warthog with large tusks. It is very sad that no clear photograph of the creature is readily available and the only small clip that exists was salvaged for the 1977 **DOCTOR WHO** documentary. With a little care the story would still exist today, but tragically it was junked in between the filming of the documentary in 1976 and the DWAS' request to buy its screening rights for their first convention in 1977 by BBC Enterprises.

The story centred around a wonderful alien planet with strange rock formations, a weird landscape, none of which related to anything on Earth. But of course the Hartnell era surpassed at creating convincing alien landscapes which bore no resemblance to anything on 20th Century Earth, such as in **The Web Planet.** Upon this scenario were two crashed spaceships containing the Drahvins and the Rills, the former morally proving that beauty is only skin deep whereas the hideous Rills, with their Chumblie servants, turned out to be a kind and gentle race, willing to sacrifice themselves to let everybody else survive. A great story which is sadly underrated.

Then on to the weird and mysterious **Mission to the Unknown,** which no-one knew at the time would lead on to the epic that followed. I was deeply impressed at the time at the array of creatures portrayed, especially Malpha who had a sort of cracked and ugly face looking something like a grotesque parody of someone with eczema. The Varga plants were particularly menacing; a combination of cotton wool and thorns which frightened me by the fact that somebody who became infected by them could actually become taken over and turn into vegetable matter - an idea that would form a firmer base much later on in **The Seeds of Doom.** Like with much of the Hinchcliffe era they left a particularly nasty taste in ones mouth. The Daleks were interesting and well-portrayed as usual, and the scenario was beautifully set for the epic to follow. Of course this was the only episode not to feature either the Doctor or his companions, and the last time we saw the Doctor was at the end of episode four of **Galaxy Four** where he looks at the TARDIS scanner showing the planet Kembel and says to Vicki "Look at that planet. That's nice, I wonder what's going on there...", totally, oblivious as the camera then zooms down towards the planet and focusses onto a jungle clearing where we see an astronaut writhing in agony, muttering to himself, "I must kill...I must kill..."

The Myth Makers was my all-time favourite historical story. Although it had a slight comedy edge, it wasn't played as slapstick in the way that **The Romans** was. It contained some wonderful characterisations, particularly Cassandra played by Frances White who many years later played the part of Juliet in I Claudeus. I remember that for some strange reason she was never credited in the Radio Times even though she was the best character in the story, along with the wonderfully doddering Priam (Max Adrian), the bungling Paris (Barrie Ingham), the rather loud and bluff Odysseus (Ivor Salter) and the naïve Agamemnon (Francis de Wolff). A wonderful bunch of characters taken from Ancient Greek mythology, it is interesting that although Helen of Troy was mentioned many times in the story she never ever appeared, even though the Trojan Horse myth was based around her. I loved the idea of the Doctor being in one camp with Vicki in another and Steven flitting in between trying to save the latter. A greatly scripted story, but I was very disappointed to read the novelisation by Donald Cotton, which many people liked very much, but which I found to be a total let-down having appreciated the subtleties of the story so much. As with many of the Hartnell stories, **The Myth Makers** featured the familiar plot device of the Doctor being separated from the TARDIS early on and spending the rest of the story trying to get back to it.

We move on to the greatest **DOCTOR WHO** story ever made in the history of the programme, in my opinion, and remains so to this day. Whereas **The War Games** became a total bore until its ninth and tenth episodes, and whereas **The Trial of a Time Lord** nowhere near sustained its fourteen episodes and should never have been made, **The Daleks' Master Plan** was an all-round masterpiece and could not have been told in any less than its eleven episodes (needless to say the Christmas Day excursion did not contribute to the storyline and so was not the classic the rest of the story proved to be). The direction of Douglas Camfield combined with the scripting of Terry Nation and Dennis Spooner gelled in such a way that defied description, and hopefully the long-awaited novelisation will do at least adequate justice to a masterful story. Rich characters, such as Kevin Stoney's Mavic Chen, and tense moments such as the pathetic Katarina's self-sacrifice - the first time that we discovered a companion could actually die - abounded, and several other notable highlights included: the conference of allies in episode two presenting the wierdest array of aliens ever seen in **DOCTOR WHO** (twelve as opposed to the seven we'd seen in **Mission to the Unknown**); the execution of Trantis is episode seven; the eerily abandoned city corridors in episode eleven accompanied by suitably chilling and spooky sound effects; the Daleks turning on Mavic Chen and exterminating him in episode twelve; and, of course, the final shock where Sara Kingdom whithers and dies before our eyes, followed by Steven reversing the Time Destructor and the Daleks regressing into protoplasmic blobs.

After such an epic the rest of the season could only seem tame by comparison and yet the story that followed, **The Massacre,** was a very serious historical adventure and very unlike those that had gone before. Again the Doctor disappears via a plot device and is replaced by the Abbot of Amboise who is his exact double and the viewer was never sure whether he was in fact the Doctor in disguise until episode four. Some of the tale was rather inept but nonetheless it was not a bad story.

Next followed **The Ark,** which was really two stories in one: the first two episodes set on the ark in space heading towards the planet of Refusis containing all human life aided by their slaves the Monoids; and by the second two episodes the ark has reached its destination but by which time the Monoids have turned the tables on the humans and become the masters. The story is another of those 'forgotten' and underrated tales which, like many of Season Three's stories, contained a strong moral theme.

This was followed by possibly the second greatest **DOCTOR WHO** story in **The Celestial Toymaker.** For a season to contain such gems as **The Daleks' Master Plan and The Celestial Toymaker** was unusually rare. The concept behind the story was unique. It was initially set up by John Wiles and Donald Tosh, but as they left Innes Lloyd and Gerry Davis came in and changed that concept somewhat and it is my firm belief that this change in concepts - with so many inspired minds working on it - caused the story to become the classic that it was. It dealt, of course, with the all-powerful Toymaker set in his own domain, hijacking creatures from other worlds to play his macabre games such as a deadly version of musical chairs! The final battle of wits between the Doctor and the Toymaker at the end is one of the great moments of the show's history.

This was, sadly, followed by a story which retained the tag as 'worst story ever' until **The Horns of Nimon** came along and relinquished it and subsequent many stories since. **The Gunfighters** was a very bad and embarrassing attempt at setting a story in the Wild West with that awful Ballad of the Last Chance Saloon sung by Lynda Baron. The acting as well was very hammy and the only good point was that William Hartnell had a chance to excel and in this story his characterisation really steals the show. Everybody else, unfortunately, suffers very badly in comparison. Even such noted actors as Shane Rimmer gave a truly pitiful performance. This story, in short, should never have been made and will forever remain a true embarrassment to **DOCTOR WHO.**

Thankfully **The Savages** helped salvage the series' reputation somewhat. It was another great strongly moral tale about a race of Elders, who should have known better, who gained their strength and racial purity by preying on the weak, in this case the secondary race savages who used to be artistic and creative until their skills were drained from them leaving them as virtually empty husks. It was a marvellous twist to the story when the Doctor violently objected to this barbaric practice and he himself had his life force sucked from him and transferred to the Elders' leader, Jano (Frederick Jaeger) who subsequently became imbued with the Doctor's own conscious will and became instrumental in the downfall of his civilisation.

The series finally ended with **The War Machines,** a story not seen at the time as the classic it has since become, mainly because it was the first to be firmly set on present day Earth. (The only previous present day story was **Planet of Giants** but there the regular characters were only one inch tall, and although **The Chase** featured some scenes on present day Earth, it didn't settle there). It can also be seen as a distant pioneer to the evolvement of the UNIT concept a few seasons later. There are bad moments in the story, primarily that Gerry Davis should never have allowed the WOTAN computer to address the lead character as "Doctor Who" - the Doctor has **always** only ever been called just that, The Doctor, but **never** "Doctor Who"! This incident had me up in arms at the time! Also there was nothing original about the idea of a mad computer, although Kit Pedler was, in fact, years ahead of his time in predicting that to some extent the world would be taken over with the machines. There were many ideas in this story which are now in very common use but in 1966 were not.

The story ended with Ben and Polly returning Dodo's key to the Doctor and letting themselves into the TARDIS and before we knew what was happening the police-box dematerialised and we were not to see their confrontation with the Doctor until the season after the summer break.

It ended a classic season of great **DOCTOR WHO** stories with only one Dodo and two absolute all-time classics. I only wish the production team of today could achieve something half as good.

SEASON 4 (1966/67)
by Bruce Campbell

THE FOURTH SEASON was a landmark in DOCTOR WHO folklore with its mixture of monsters, historical stories and a changeover of Doctors midway through its course. It shared some very poor stories and, at the same time, classics of the genre. It is also a season from which sadly only a very limited selection of episodes still exists.

The Smugglers, filmed as part of Season Three, was held over and kicked off the Fourth Season. Like its predecessor, **The Savages,** it was not a particularly strong or memorable story although it featured some atmospheric moments. Memory dictates that the costumes and location filming enhanced the impact considerably, but **The Smugglers** nevertheless remains a typical example of William Hartnell losing steam in his interpretation of the Doctor. Brian Hayles did manage to create an atmosphere reminiscent of Moonfleet with his swashbuckling storyline, but the cast generally lacked any real interest or punch to the story resulting in a lack of depth to what could have been a fine example of a **DOCTOR WHO** historical adventure.

Much has already been documented about William Hartnell's exit / the Cybermen's debut in **The Tenth Planet,** a typical '60s story which suffered from cheap scenery and tacky affects but which nonetheless held an eerie and menacing feel. In many ways it reminded me of the gothic sci-fi movies of the '50s such as The Thing which had a similar scenario. It contained its fair share of action and also, due to the confines of the base, gave the viewer a feeling of claustrophobia. This story heralded a return to the monsters which were to set the scene for much of Season Four.

Despite the reassuring return of the Daleks, it was to take a few episodes for the viewers to totally adjust to Patrick Troughton in the rôle of the Doctor. My memories of this particular story, now twenty-two years old, together with the following one **The Highlanders,** are vague to say the least, but it does provide me with a collection of incidents which have stuck in my mind since. Its brisk pace and suspense lifted it well above many other stories of the time and Patrick Troughton's clowning around and his incessant playing of his recorder helped to break up the tension and demonstrated what an extraordinary acting talent he possessed. The Daleks in this story had more menace and presence than their more recent predecessors, thanks to the excellent scriptwriting of David Whitaker and the guidance of their original director Christopher Barry.

The following two stories were ultimately weak in content and pace. **The Highlanders** - the final attempt at a historical story - had little to commend it bar the introduction of the robust character of Jamie McCrimmon. However, it did have a sharp and gritty realism to it and, like **The Smugglers,** good use was made of locations.

The Underwater Menace would undoubtedly have worked better had the BBC had more money to spend on what the script writer originally envisaged. It was one of those unintentionally humorous occasions with an outlandish villain, Professor Zaroff, who provided a touch of comic relief to the tale. The destruction of Atlantis in episode four, I recall, was handled like a '70s disaster movie with the BBC special effects department having a field day. The 'Fish People' themselves left a lot to be desired, lacking any real sense of realism and therefore came across unconvincingly.

The Moonbase was altogether a superior story all round. The newly designed Cybermen had a more menacing feel to them and arguably these 'mark two' versions are the most effectively-realised Cybermen to date. The storyline, although slightly implausible at times, kept the action flowing with some fine moments of suspense throughout the story, aided by some effective stock music.

The Macra Terror - one of my all-time favourite stories - was very reminiscent of the '50s 'big bug' sci-fi movies. The first shot of the Macra crab monster - with the camera zooming into its mouth - and subsequent episodes in the claustrophobic tunnels remain emblazoned in my memory for the horror they evoked into my young mind of the time. With hindsight it is easy to see why this particular adventure became a victim of TV clean-up campaigners.

The Faceless Ones in comparison to the previous two stories was somewhat disappointing. Much of the action took place at Gatwick Airport and for a six-parter it was generally a case of too much talk and not enough action that made me soon lose interest in the Doctor's battle against the sinister Chameleons.

The Evil of the Daleks soon restored my interest and is justifiably considered as being one of Patrick Troughton's - if not the entire series' - finest stories. This was the last time we were to see Terry Nation's creations for five years while he attempted to push them in the States to no avail. The splendid script afforded the opportunity for some particularly fine acting, excellent sets and special effects and for Patrick Troughton to show off his acting abilitiy to its greatest effect - paired up with the equally awesome Marius Goring as Theodore Maxtible. The carnage at the end of the story representing the Daleks' supposed "final end" is remembered by many, and such a dynamic climax to a story has since to be emulated.

Season Four succeeded in putting **DOCTOR WHO** back on the map in a big way, and as well as Patrick Troughton, much credit should also go to Innes Lloyd who succeeded in instilling in the season the very essence of what **DOCTOR WHO** is all about.

SEASON 5 (1967/68)
by David J. Howe

WHAT IS IT that keeps a television programme on the air, year in, year out ? Well, ratings for one thing, but people will only watch something if they like what they see - if they can 'relate' to it. This is why the soap operas of today are so popular; they present a view of life that people can either relate to (EastEnders, Brookside, etc.) or aspire to (Dallas, Dynasty, etc.). Other popular series, for example Star Trek, attained the status of 'cult' long after their initial runs on television had ended, the appetites of the fans sated with innumerable repeats and new stories published in books and magazines.

But what of our favourite; the tales through time and space of that wanderer known only as the Doctor ? Why is he such a popular character and how has that programme survived where others have fallen ? Certainly it is in the basic format of the show itself that the answers to these questions lies, but I think the answer is simpler than that, so simple that it is one of the most endearing and obvious facets of the show, and something which gets overlooked by most critics. The popularity is due to the believability of the characters, the monsters and the situations. Nowhere was this exemplified better than in Season Five, arguably one of the most popular and enjoyable seasons ever, and one which firmly established the image of the Second Doctor as an individual against the mighty.

For the fifth season, the 'sixties swingers' Ben and Polly had been replaced with a quiet and gentle Victorian girl, someone who would not react quite as we would to the strange and the terrifying. Interestingly enough, one of the first things Victoria did once on board the TARDIS was to change out of her flowing dresses and into a mini-skirt and blouse - moving with the times even if she was worried about showing too much leg.

Victoria's dress sense may have been uppermost in her mind when the TARDIS made its first port of call - the planet Telos, home of the legendary tombs of the Cybermen - but was soon forgotten as the adventure unfolded. Quite why the TARDIS decided to arrive on Telos at that time is a mystery; certainly it was very convenient for the team of archaeologists who would never have breached the Cybermen's complex series of tests and traps if it hadn't been for the Doctor's clues. However, this was about the only input the Doctor had in this story - he was not a do-er, he was a watcher. He showed the way with carefully placed hints and tips but never leapt into the fray in the same manner as some of his future incarnations would.

The Tomb of the Cybermen was a brilliant and inspired season opener. It had mystery and suspense: are the Cybermen dead ? What are Kaftan and Klieg's motives ? The marvellous 'trick' of showing a Cyberman for the first time, only to have it revealed as a dummy for testing weapons, kept the viewer on the edge of his seat (and frequently behind it). All this excitement climaxed at the close of episode two as the assembled humans (and Time Lord) watched helplessly as the inert forms of the Cybermen started to twitch and shudder in their tombs, finally breaking through the icy cell fronts and clambering down to release the impressive and magnificent form of their Controller. His first rasping electronic words - "You belong to us...you will be like us" - chilled the bones of every man, woman and child watching at that time. Of course the humans manage to escape and, surviving the threat of the rodent-like Cybermats, seal the Cybermen back into their tomb, there to lie until another unwitting party releases them.

This story, like all its contemporaries this season, was eminently memorable. It had a visual style and an impact that set it apart from similar offerings in the 1980s. Although it was only four episodes long, it seemed to contain far more than just 90 minutes of television and it affected its audience in a way that has seldom happened before, or since.

Using a four-parter to open the season was a good idea as the viewers didn't have to wait a further five weeks before the conclusion was known and it got them involved from the start. The following six weeks were also very memorable, but for different reasons. Everyone loves a mystery. Whether it is the Loch Ness Monster, fairies at the bottom of the garden or UFOs, people enjoy pondering over their possible existence. The writing team of Mervyn Haisman and Henry Lincoln realised this and constructed a story around another of these 'living paradoxes' - the Yeti. In true adventure style, we are told that the Yeti are timid and peaceful creatures and yet we see one running amok through a camp site and meet a monestery of frightened Monks who have been attacked time and again by these strange creatures. There is another mystery here, and this time the Doctor takes the upper hand in getting to the bottom of it.

Perhaps a little overlong (something that can easily spoil a six-part story), **The Abominable Snowmen** is memorable for the Yeti, and yet not for the other characters that populate it. This is in itself curious because the furry bundles had no lines, no expression, and made no noise other than that infuriatingly catchy bleeping. They turned out of course to be robots, which explains their behaviour but not why they were so popular and frightening. Indeed their impact was practically instantaneous as a sequel was almost immediately commissioned for the **same** season - a feat that has not been equalled in the programme's history!

The Yeti somehow revealed a primal fear in all of us; a fear of the unknown. That the unknown in this case was an alien force and the Yeti simply robotic extensions of that force makes it all understandable. The following story took that fear of the unknown and placed it in another context.

Following the icy chill of the tombs, and the cold and windswept Himalayan mountainside, we now arrive in a snowy and desolate landscape. So far that season, the cold had hidden an alien menace which manifested itself once the Doctor arrived - this story was no exception. The snow and ice is in fact caused by the third ice age, and a group of scientists are trying to halt the inexorable advance of a glacier using a heat weapon called the Ioniser. Unfortunately they stumble across a strange figure buried in the ice and in true Howard Hawkes fashion dig it out. What they have found is an Ice Warrior and it isn't long before it revives and uses the humans' resources to rescue its ship and crew from the depths of the glacier face.

Unlike **The Abominable Snowmen, The Ice Warriors** never flags. It moves from scene to scene with an artistic grace, and the aliens are given character, emotion, empathy and even names. This was due to Brian Hayles' skill as a storyteller. All of his scripts for **WHO** went beyond the alien menace and gave us a believable background and motive for their actions. Again, however, the subsidiary characters suffer at the expense of the massive hulking warriors. Bernard Bresslaw's Varga has yet to be equalled in menace and power and remains a terrifying memory.

Cybermen...Yeti...Ice Warriors, what a way to get a season underway, and, to carry it through the following six weeks, in a story different from all the others in the season, we had the consummate acting skills of Patrick Troughton playing a dual rôle as the Doctor and the evil genius Salamander.

It is not surprising that this story, of all those this season, is the least remembered. Look at the material surrounding it; in a room of gemstones you tend not to notice a single ruby. **The Enemy of the World** was a strange story, somehow out of place in the

Troughton era. It featured no aliens and had no real reason behind it. It was almost as if it had been written specifically to enable Troughton to play a baddie. In this respect it failed to uphold the high standards of the rest of the season, but on the other hand, it showed that **DOCTOR WHO** could be all things - in this case a political drama.

The viewers did not have to wait long before the monsters returned. The next story again featured the Yeti, but this time in the far more familiar and accessible location of the London Underground. **The Web of Fear** is a very important story as it laid much of the groundwork for the stories of the seventies: We are introduced to Lethbridge-Stewart for the first time; the army are there, all guns and grenades against the alien invasion; the Doctor and his companions are suitably matched against the Great Intelligence; and the most is made of the 'Enemy Within' syndrome (one of the humans is a traitor, but which one...?).

The Web of Fear, from our memories and what remains of it to be seen, was one of the great 'frighteners' of the Troughton Era. The eerie music, the dark sets, the cobwebs, the muscular Yeti lurching out of the darkness of a fog-shrouded London street; this was serious stuff and indelibly inscribed memories over the entire country. Almost everyone who saw this story remembers it - how many other TV programmes can claim that persistence of memory ?

Following terrors from the London Underground came terrors from the sea, as **Fury from the Deep** petrified kids on beaches everywhere as the seaweed came alive and stung you, sapping your mind and transforming you into a gas-breathing monster.

One of the notable things about this story was the strength of the characterisation of everyone in it. Victor Maddern was perfect as the obsessed Robson, while Oak and Quill, the 'Little and Large' of the pipeline, chilled everyone. Unlike the previous stories, where the monster remained in the memory, this time it was the characters that you tended to remember, probably because the actual seaweed creatures were only on screen for a very short time and the horror was mostly provided by their human agents.

With such a glut of brilliant material, this season could hardly fail. **Fury from the Deep** touched nerves that **The Web of Fear** missed and vice versa. The horrors changed from story to story but all our basic fears are contained within the season: dehumanisation; the unknown; the alien; the elements (storms, earthquakes, etc.); cobwebs; darkness; nightmares from the sea...

The season officially drew to a close with another Cyberman tale. **The Wheel in Space** is not perhaps the most memorable of the Cyberman invasions, possibly because they hardly appear in it at all, but it probably had the most intricate plot. It is hard to assess its true worth though because the two episodes that still exist don't give great cause for excitement (unlike, say, **The Web of Fear** episode which leaves you aching to see more). The visual style is lack-lustre and pedestrian, but for all that it still remains a valid and viable **DOCTOR WHO** adventure.

The season had one further surprise in store however. In a unique moment in **DOCTOR WHO,** the close of **The Wheel in Space** lead directly into a repeat of **The Evil of the Daleks** from the previous season, thus giving an additional boost to an already superb lineup.

So, contained within one single season of **DOCTOR WHO** we have all the popular monsters of the time (Daleks, Cybermen, Ice Warriors, Yeti); all of the most frightening fears and phobias; some of the best performances (Jack Watling's Travers, Peter Barkworth's Clent, Patrick Troughton's Salamander and Victor Maddern's Robson); some of the best stories ever **(The Web of Fear, The Tomb of the Cybermen, Fury from the Deep, The Ice Warriors)** plus a repeat of probably the best Dalek story ever made. It is very difficult indeed to imagine a better line up.

All these stories had one thing in common; the theme of the Doctor as a small man against the mighty. Often the enemy to be battled against was more than simply the alien. In **The Ice Warriors,** for example, the Doctor has to battle against the blinkered views of the humans as well as the more tangible menace of the Warriors, and the same theme crops up again in **Fury from the Deep.** Troughton's Doctor was turning out to be a thinker and a manipulator, never at the forefront of the action but always one step ahead of it.

Those really were the golden days of **DOCTOR WHO,** occasionally equalled since, but never matched.

SEASON 6 (1968/69)

by Gavin French

NO ONE WILL FORGET the problems that had beset DOCTOR WHO prior to the making of 'The Trial of a Time Lord' in 1986, but one wonders whether it is merely coincidence that the programme was also under serious threat of termination when we first saw the **Doctor put on trial by his own people at the end of Season Six in 1969. Indeed, Season Six itself was beset by problems of its own that must have caused a few serious headaches for production team and cast alike, and with a season lasting ten and a half months nobody had much opportunity to take a rest from the rigorous schedules that are demanded by a show of this kind.**

The season's problems started from the very first story, **The Dominators,** when script disagreements between the production team and writers Mervyn Haisman and Henry Lincoln resulted in massive rewrites and the use of the pen-name of Norman Ashby on the show's credits. The story was a very topical one in those days of Flower-Power and re-emphasised a theme that had been used in the programme as early as **The Daleks** in 1963; the fact that pacifism can only work if everybody subscribes to it - a lesson that many politicians and pressure-groups have still not learned to this day!

The Doctor's attempts to escape from the approaching flows of lava at the end of **The Dominators** led neatly into the TARDIS's trip into the Land of Fiction, but this was not the only problem that the story inherited from its predecessor. Due to the rewriting that had become necessary on **The Dominators,** an episode was cut from that story and tacked onto the episode allocation for **The Mind Robber.** This, of course, resulted in more rewriting on this story with the effect that the vast bulk of episode one was in fact written as padding by script-editor Derrick Sherwin. In fact, the whole basis of the story was a very different concept for **DOCTOR WHO,** perhaps only bearing comparison with **The Celestial Toymaker** a few years earlier. But it was the concept around which the story was based that helped solve what could have been a major problem for the crew when Frazer Hines contracted Chicken Pox from his nephew. Fortunately, after a little more rewriting, Frazer's cousin Hamish Wilson stepped in to the breach briefly to play a Jamie whose face had been conveniently rearranged.

It was a logical move to bring Douglas Camfield in again to direct the next story - the only eight-parter to date - to reintroduce the character of newly-promoted Brigadier Alistair Lethbridge-Stewart and to introduce the concept of UNIT which was to become a central part of the **DOCTOR WHO** mythos. **The Invasion** Cybermen were arguably a great improvement visually over their predecessors but were let down terribly by their voices which resembled a strangulated Donald Duck! There were some strong performances from the supporting cast with the flirtacious Isobel Watkins having the potential of a good companion and the enigmatic Kevin Stoney this time allied with the Cybermen.

The rescreening of **The Krotons** in the 1982 **Five Faces of DOCTOR WHO** was simply because this was sadly the only remaining Troughton four-parter and had nothing to do with the overall quality of the story. Although a great admirer of the work of the late Robert Holmes his first effort for the programme was not altogether impressive, although the script had actually started life as a piece for another series. The story did benefit, however, from some effective cliffhangers and a few memorable scenes, a notable example being the Doctor's attempts to use the Learning Machine.

The Seeds of Death has had the privilege of being the only black and white **DOCTOR WHO** video release so far, but whilst being an interesting adventure - if a little drawn out at times - it simply failed to muster up the enthusiasm of the original Ice Warriors' story and is probably the least-exciting of all the Ice Warrior stories to date, albeit that they are long overdue for a return. I felt that the earlier episodes, particularly the Moon scenes, worked best in this story while the later episodes were far less believable. The concept of one Ice Warrior getting as far as he did and doing as much damage as he did in such a scientifically-advanced age is rather hard to accept, and the destruction of the fungus by rainfall brings back memories of scenes of Triffids and sea-water from the John Wyndham classic.

Whilst not wishing to appear to be in an anti-Robert Holmes mood, I'm afraid that **The Space Pirates** was another fairly disappointing story. In typical Holmesian style it has some interesting characters and some interesting dialogue, but overall it was a rather slow and uninspiring piece of fiction for which, try as I might, I can gather no real enthusiasm. It is, however, certainly a story I would watch with interest if the remainder of it were ever recovered in the hope that it would be more visually stimulating than it comes across as in other forms.

The pièce de résistance of the season for me came in the form of the last story, the epic Terrance Dicks and Malcolm Hulke tale **The War Games.** Despite its length this is a story that I thoroughly enjoyed enough to watch it without a break for four and a half hours at the 1983 NFT weekend. The storyline was strong, the characters believable and production values high. This was an example of Patrick Troughton at his best and made a fitting story in which to end his reign and once again introduce the viewers to the concept of regeneration. It was also, of course, an important milestone in the programme's history in being the last black and white story and being the story which ended a lot of the mystery about the Doctor himself by introducing us to his own people and his home planet (although unnamed at this stage). There must surely have been many people who wondered whether the show could still be called **'DOCTOR WHO',** although perhaps it was inevitable that this would happen if the show were to continue much longer - after all, the programme, like the Doctor himself, has had to change direction many times in order to secure its continued existence. The very fact that the programme has lasted for 25 years must prove that many such decisions made along the way were the right ones.

By the close of Season Six, as Patrick Troughton swirled into nothingness on a court-room screen, the many clouds that had hung over the show's future at the start of the season had been lifted. Gone were any thoughts of replacing the series with a Quartermass-type show and gone were the gruelling schedules of having to produce a complex series on screen for forty-plus weeks of the year. It must have been with some relief that Terrance Dicks, Derrick Sherwin and Barry Letts could start planning the seventh season of **DOCTOR WHO** with less air-time to fill, more money, colour, a new cast of regulars and, of course, a new Doctor.

Season Six was not the best season that **DOCTOR WHO** has produced. It had its good points and its bad, its classics and its not so classics. But it was the last season of its kind and it brought the programme through one of its most difficult periods of its history. It must surely be a tribute to all those who worked on Season Six that we have been able to enjoy another nineteen seasons since then, and a tribute especially to the dearly remembered Patrick Troughton that so many of those stories are still fondly thought of to this day.

SEASON 7 (1970)

by David Saunders

JULY TO DECEMBER 1969 seemed to last forever. I had missed 'The Tenth Planet' and episode one of 'Power of the Daleks' so I hadn't seen the Hartnell-Troughton change nor had I been able to watch the tenth episode of 'The War Games'.

I had read in the national press that Jon Pertwee was taking over the leading rôle in **DOCTOR WHO** which fascinated me as I had followed The Navy Lark for several years on the radio. I was not able to conceive how this 'funny' man with many voices was going to play my hero.

When the summer break after Season Six was over I was disappointed that the series had not returned at the beginning of the autumn as I had come to expect, but at least my favourite television programme would be back in colour! I ensured that I was not out at work on 3rd January 1970; I was **not** going to miss another historic moment in the show's history!

All day I could not relax, so strong was the anticipation of that evening's episode. When it was all over I was most disappointed. True, when first seen he was still clad in Troughton's clothing, but he had spent virtually the remainder of the episode in a hospital bed and there wasn't a creature or monster to be seen. The new girl looked far too old but at least the Brigadier was there; somehow this latter seemed comforting and even the addition of colour - revealing that the uniforms were actually a very insipid shade - did not detract from this. I mentally gave the episode a grudging 50%, but resolved that I would be back next week. Next week came and with it the first glimpse of an Auton, and I knew that I was right to be following the series still.

By the time that **Spearhead from Space** was completely transmitted, I was hooked all over again. That six month wait had not been in vain. I couldn't yet place what was different about the series but I knew I still liked it. In those days I didn't think to conduct an analysis on such elements as its being shot totally out of studio or why the Brigadier now seemed a regular or that Liz was the first substitute companion for Ian and Barbara rather than Susan. All this would become clear some eight years later when I was destined to discover **DOCTOR WHO** fandom and the DWAS, of which I'd be the Co-ordinator for five years, but that's another story... At this stage I knew only that what ever changes had been introduced, I still enjoyed this programme over all others that I bothered to follow.

When **The Silirians** came along I was entrenched in the idea of this dormant species and its claim to the Earth. I didn't read much science fiction at this time and all the concepts seemed totally original to me. I was shocked at the lack of the TARDIS - the dear old time machine wasn't even mentioned - but somehow took to the introduction of Bessie, little realising how attached the Doctor and we the viewers would become to her. I remembered fondly the first year of the programme when two of the first four stories lasted for seven weeks apiece and was pleased that this was to happen again. I loved the angle of seeing the world from the wounded Silurian's point of view for the first couple of episodes, though I did grow impatient for a direct view of it, just as I had with the second episode of **The Daleks** six or so years earlier. I was puzzled that Spencer's 'cave drawings' were never satisfactorily explained and amazed when so many of UNIT's troops were killed, including Captain Hawkins. (I obviously suffered a memory lapse since more troops from Colonel Pemberton's patrol had died during **The Web of Fear** and this hadn't worried me at all then!). I did begin to wonder at the way this new Doctor spoke to civil servants and people in authority. How rude he could be, and how sarcastic! I wasn't too sure if I really liked him in this body, but I did share his angry indignation when the Silurians were blown up at the story's abrupt climax.

This crosspatch approach continued into the next adventure when he was talking to both Cornish and Taltalian. So did Bessie and the seven episode formula. This latter, however, proved the serial's downfall. For the first time since **Marco Polo** the storyline seemed to be dragging. I'd felt that the travels in that fourth story had been far too drawn out and now this **Ambassadors of Death** was doing the same. Now (1988) I would give plenty to see **Marco Polo** once more as opposed to listening to an audio tape, and **The Ambassadors of Death** is my favourite among Season Seven's offerings; how opinions change with time and understanding! As I said before, this adventure was painfully slow in being resolved. It was pretty obvious to me from episode two onwards that the astronauts had been substituted by aliens, and also (whilst I didn't yet appreciate his motivations) that Genral Carrington was behind the whole shebang. I was frustrated by only receiving a glimpse of the faces of the ambassadors; annoyed by the Doctor's stunt with the 'anti-theft' device installed in Bessie (this was **DOCTOR WHO,** not a James Bond film!); and mystified by the lack of explanation for the Doctor's sleight of hand in episode two. What irritated me the most, however, was why the Doctor flew in the rocket - **when** was he going to travel in the TARDIS again ?! This 'down to Earth' setting was beginning to seem too samey, and having seven episodes of this didn't help one's concentration.

I was most relieved that at least a parallel world was visited in **Inferno** and that the TARDIS console made an appearance therein (I'd missed episode one of **Ambassadors of Death),** even if I didn't then stop to ponder just how the Doctor had managed to get it out of those narrow doors! The Primords were a little disappointing (and harped back to the unresolved cave drawings in **The Silurians),** but I enjoyed seeing the Brigade Leader, Platoon Under Leader and Section Leader parallels with our Earth. I'd remembered Hur when Alethea Charlton appeared in **The Time Meddler** and Kal when Jeremy Young featured in **Mission to the Unknown** and now I thought of Za with the reapperance of Derek Newark; somehow this helped my sense of cohesion within the series!

By the time the Doctor returned to our Earth, I'd grown to accept and even like Liz Shaw (and was consequently disappointed when she did not reappear next season) and found the ending with the Doctor landing in the rubbish tip most amusing.

Suddenly it was all over and I came to realise that not only had we had to wait six months for this series, it had only run six months as well! The Pertwee cover of the 3-9th January issue of the Radio Times had not really given any clues as to how he would tackle the rôle but now, four stories later, I had come to appreciate his good, if pompous, intentions and to be resigned to the Earth setting; but at least the greatest programme ever was now in colour!

If there had been cause for doubt over **DOCTOR WHO**'s future during Patrick Troughton's third season, then its popularity was restored with Jon Pertwee's first. The British viewing public gave an overwhelming thumbs-up to the programme's new format and its fortunes turned from waning into waxing once more - it was not just me that cared about it after all!

Eighteen years later, and with ten years of active fandom behind me, it is possible to analyse the success of Season Seven. The new active Doctor, the Earth-bound setting, the location filming, the 4-7-7-7 format, the choice of writers and directors were all elements very firmly considered by producers Sherwin and Letts and script editor Dicks (the only continuing influence from the Troughton era), and the selection of Jon Pertwee as the new lead by outgoing producer Bryant must not be forgotten. The series would never be the same again, not least in revealing some of the Doctor's background at the expense of shedding the element of mystery. The upgrading of scripts and the number of episodes in the last three stories allowed far greater characterisation which appealed to older viewers and brought about revived interest. Three legacies were left for the future, namely the Autons and the Siluirians and, with part one of **The Ambassadors of Death,** the ending of episode 'sting'! It is that serial which, with eighteen years of hindsight, I fully appreciate and now rate the best of the four: the four stories which saved the series from extinction and helped towards ensuring its longevity.

SEASON 8 (1971)
by Simon Lydiard

SEASON EIGHT began its transmission on 2nd January 1971. I was eight years old at the time. I enjoyed the season immensely. Due to my age I had no memory of William Hartnell's Doctor and although Patrick Troughton was, so to speak, my 'first Doctor', it was with Jon Pertwee's portrayal that my enthusiasm really took off.

With the benefit of hindsight, not to say nostalgia, I now claim Troughton as my favourite Doctor, but Pertwee was such fun to imitate in the playground - dashing about with your overcoat top button done up and the sleeves loose, threatening to "reverse the polarity of the neutron flow" with a biro as a Sonic Screwdriver!

Given my great enthusiasm for the series as an eight year old, I thought it might be an interesting exercise to look back, seventeen years later, at one of the seasons which fired my enthusiasm. Would I, a twenty-six year old civil servant and city councillor, be able to recapture the sheer joy of an eight year old schoolboy ? Would it tempt me to dash about the council chamber in full robes emulating the Third Doctor ? I hope not.

Terror of the Autons introduced us to a character referred to by Terrance Dicks as "DOCTOR WHO's Moriarty" - The Master, devised by Dicks and Barry Letts to be the series' supervillain. In keeping with the trend begun in **The War Games** of revealing more about the Doctor's background, the Master would be a member of the Doctor's own race - the Time Lords - and even claimed to be "an old friend" of the Doctor's. Not only that, the Master would be at least the Doctor's intellectual equal. In fact, the Master's degree in Cosmic Science was higher than the Doctor's.

The actor chosen to play the Master was Roger Delgado, an old friend of Barry Letts, who had already made several unsuccessful attempts to break into DOCTOR WHO. I remember when I first saw **Terror of the Autons** being utterly convinced by Delgado's portrayal and it is pleasing to note that, even seventeen years later, the performance still shines. It takes skill to deliver the line, "I am the Master. You will obey me!" and make it sound anything other than corny. Delgado made it sound chilling.

Another character introduced to the series in **Terror of the Autons** was Jo Grant, played by Katy Manning, and here, I'm afraid, seventeen years does make a difference. Katy Manning's performance is shaky, to say the least, which is a shame as it is delivered with such obvious enthusiasm.

Terror of the Autons is perhaps best remembered for precisely that - terror. It contained some of the most frightening moments in the programme's history up to that point, and possibly beyond. Who can forget McDermott being 'swallowed' by the inflatable armchair in episode two, or the unmasking of the Auton policeman at the conclusion of that episode ? A moment I had forgotten was when, in episode three, the Doctor opens a safe in Farrel's office to be confronted by an Auton which fires off a shot, just narrowly missing the Brigadier. Most terrifying of all, is the concept of the plastic daffodils which spray out a clear plastic film that covers the nose and mouth, thus suffocating the victim. "Death is always more frightening when it strikes invisibly," as the Master says.

In almost every respect **Terror of the Autons** was a success, bar one - originality. It may have escaped my notice as an eight year old, but it is now blindingly obvious that the story is a thinly disguised rewrite of the previous season's opener - **Spearhead from Space.** Nevertheless, it is still terrific entertainment.

The Mind of Evil benefits from being viewed seventeen years later. When it was shown originally it meant very little to me and consequently my memories of it were dim.

In a way **The Mind of Evil** is somewhat misplaced in Season Eight as it resembles more closely the gritty realism of the previous season. The three-way plot (Keller Machine/Peace Conference/Missile) is interesting enough, but obviously difficult to sustain since the Peace Conference suddenly drops from prominence about half way through. Nevertheless it is interesting to see DOCTOR WHO making some reference, however brief, to contemporary world politics.

As with so many of the Pertwee stories, **The Mind of Evil** contains some excellent performances, particularly the perennial Michael Sheard as Dr Summers, and Neil McCarthy as Barnham.

Unfortunately, interesting as **The Mind of Evil** is, it does not quite seem to justify its six-episode length.

It still amazes me that **The Claws of Axos** was Bob Baker and Dave Martin's first televised script. It was so good. Perhaps the fact that it took a year to write, and numerous rewrites, accounts for it being so well-polished and intelligent. The concept of an organic culture, in which even space ships are grown, is most interesting, particularly when it turns out that that culture is parasitical.

As well as being well written, **The Claws of Axos** is remarkably well produced, boasting some excellent special effects (and a few awful ones). The dichotomy between the beautiful, golden-skinned Axons and the malevolent orange, tentacled monsters the become is most effective. The slow-motion shots of the tentacle Axons running are almost nightmarish, and when first transmitte seemed quite frightening to me.

As a civil servant myself, I suppose I ought to object to Pet Bathurst's bumbling and officious Mr Chinn, but I don't. In fact, think I may even have met him professionally.

Despite the obvious merits of this story, there is still one rath irritating flaw. If the Axons held the Master captive originally, wh did they need to torture the Doctor to gain the secret of tim travel ?

It is tempting to call **Colony in Space** the clinker of the seaso but that would be a little unfair. It certainly had its entertainin moments. However, as the first story not to be set on Earth almost two years it was still something of a let-down. That said, can still remember being quite excited when the TARDIS doo swung open onto an alien world. Unfortunately, the TARDIS longer seemed to fade in and out when materialising a dematerialising - instead it popped in and out of existence!

The conflict between the idealistic colonists (and amongst the and the IMC men led by Dent was quite a good plot, particular with the presence of Caldwell, the conscientious mining engine played by Bernard Kay, but it was hardly rivetting science fictic The really interesting plot, which we only scratched the surface was the ancient civilisation which destroyed itself through its o evil by creating the Doomsday Weapon which, surprise surprise, t Master is after.

Colony in Space was quite fun, but really doesn't stand to comparison with what preceded it and what follow it.

It is difficult to review **The Daemons.** It's been done so ma times before. There is no doubt that when it was origina transmitted I, and many other viewers, was somewhat bowled o by it, to such an extent that it is now widely described as a class I have no hesitation in describing it as a damn go adventure.

From its very first scene in Devil's End - the rain lashing dow the wind howling and the lightning cracking the night sky **The Daemons** positively exuded atmosphere. At the time it bo delighted and terrified me.

What distinguishes **The Daemons** after all these years is t quality of the performances. Damaris Hayman is delightfully bat as Miss Hawthorne, the white witch, and Robin Wentworth hilarious as the crusty, no-nonsense Professor Horner. Mo impressive of all, of course, is Delgado's Master, putting his devili charm to good use. The scenes in which the Master conducts bla magic ceremonies are played with chilling authenticity. On Delgado could make "Mary had a little lamb" sound diabolistic!

The ending of the story, with Benton, Miss Hawthorne, the Doct and Jo dancing around the maypole may sound rather silly, but o the screen it is quite charming. Mind you, I think the Brigadier ha the right idea - he went to the pub.

Well, I enjoyed that. Reviewing Season Eight did bring back som very happy memories, most of which stand up to re-examination.

One thing is clear when viewing Season Eight - after th Quatermass-influenced hard science fiction of the previous season which must have left many children cold, Barry Letts and Terranc Dicks were keen to return DOCTOR WHO to its more traditiona and softer approach to science fantasy.

In many ways, Season Eight is the real beginning o the Pertwee era - simple, cosy, family orientated, but highly entertaining.

SEASON 9 (1972)
by Dallas Jones

SEASON NINE is, to me, a season of consolidation and could, in fact, even be called a season where the show marked time waiting for the tenth anniversary.

Season Seven had seen the biggest upheaval in the show since the regeneration of Hartnell into Troughton, with the introduction of colour and the exile of the Doctor to present-day Earth. This was followed by Season Eight when the Doctor, still stuck on Earth, gained a Moriarty - The Master - who dominated the season so much that he even began overshadowing the Doctor.

Season Nine saw the diminishing of both the Master's presence and the Doctor's Earth-bound adventures. The latter was hinted at in the previous season with **Colony in Space.** It appears that rather than push the show forward with any more new ideas, the show instead looked to its past. The popularity of Season Five - with all its monsters - seems to have been the role model, and also could have been done in preparation for the tenth anniversary to remind the public of the show's rich past. To accommodate for this the Master's returns were diminished and it was sensible that if he was to return this season, then it would at least not be in the first story, but nonetheless he would remain a binding thread to remind the public of the show's most recent past. When he did return, in **The Seas Devils,** it appears his involvement had been tagged on to the rest of the story as it would have worked just as well without him. On the other hand his involvement in **The Time Monster** was integral to the story and again it was good not to have him return immediately after **The Sea Devils,** although I think **The Mutants** was tailor-made for him to weave his nefarious web in.

This season also saw the slow breaking of the Doctor's bonds with present-day Earth, with two stories firmly set on other planets and two involving different periods in the planet's history. With the Doctor exiled, to make these stories work obvious plot devices had to be introduced, such as intervention of the Time Lords (done previously in **Colony in Space);** the Doctor's enemies having access to time travel; or, in **The Curse of Peladon,** simply forgetting altogether about the exile! The obvious restrictions the exile imposed on the series' writers must have proved frustrating and probably led to it being lifted the following season.

The opening story saw the return of the Daleks, five years after we had supposedly witnessed their final destruction in **The Evil of the Daleks.** With the show now firmly re-established, it is clear to see why they were resurrected (even if Pertwee despised them), and their publicity value probably dictated they be featured in the opening story of the season.

One notable aspect of this story is that it was not written by Terry Nation but by Louis Marks, who appears to have grafted them on to the story as an afterthought to fit in with his complex plot about the paradoxes of time travel. This appears all the more obvious when you consider how very much they are in the background and the fact that they get other groups, such as the Ogrons, to do their dirty work for them. I found the Ogrons to be the worst aspect of the story because of their limited intellect and lumbering manner; I simply could not believe the Daleks would choose them as their underlings. In addition to this their mask design was very poor, highlighted none more so than by their return in **Frontier in Space** where they were upstaged by the brilliantly conceived Draconians.

Although **Day of the Daleks** was nowhere near as good as the previous two Patrick Troughton Dalek stories, it does contain one of my favourite scenes from the Pertwee era; that of the Daleks viciously interrogating the prostrated Doctor.

We now move on to what I consider to be the jewel in Season Nine's crown, **The Curse of Peladon,** not just because it saw the return of the Ice Warriors but also because of the way Brian Hayles had developed their civilisation, a development which, I think, is one of the most unique in the show's history. The Ice Warriors still contain the presence and power that made them so memorable in their first two stories, but in a neat twist we discover that their civilisation and attitude has changed due to contact with other societies and in this story they are not the villains of the piece. This gives the story an added air of mystery because of the Doctor's past associations with the Martian warriors where they were portrayed as ruthless beings, and therefore the audience are convinced they must therefore be behind the strange happenings on Peladon.

A parallel can be seen with Peladonion society which is trying to shed its past history of barbarism and superstition in order for it to gain entry into the Galactic Federation. It is interesting to note that both the Ice Warrior and Peladon societies are still not fully matured by the end of the story as **The Monster of Peladon** will point out quite clearly a couple of seasons later.

The next story sees the Doctor back on Earth in an adventure that could have come straight out of Season Eight, with the Master teaming up with a race intent on taking control of the Earth. That this scenario is repeated again makes **The Sea Devils** a bit far-fetched, especially when it is revealed that the Sea Devils are said to be "cousins" of the Silurians. In fact the story, in many ways, is a repeat of **The Silurians,** even down to the point where the Doctor tries to negotiate to bring peace between the two groups.

The whole story could have been done without the Master's interference, and maybe he was included when the story was found to be just too close to **The Silurians** in plot. The Master is clearly the dominant villain at the beginning of the story, but he is soon overshadowed by the Sea Devils when he joins forces with them, and I remember thinking how much more careful the character would be in choosing his allies after his encounter with the Axons.

UNIT were very notable by their absence in this story which again seemed tailor-made for them, but their place was taken by the Royal Navy , possibly because their assistance had been offered free of charge to the show.

It was nice to see that the 'monster' was hidden from the audience as long as possible, with teasing glimpses adding to the suspense, but when the Sea Devils were finally revealed there were too many long-shots of them and therefore their menace was lessened - particularly in the cliffhanger where a group of eight Sea Devils arise from the sea all bunched together in the middle of an expansive view. Much better when they are seen in close-up suddenly, a typical example of this occurring at the end of episode five when one suddenly confronts the Doctor and Jo with its 'gun' ready to fire.

The gun itself I consider to one of the most ingenious props in the series' history - simply because it doesn't **look** like a gun! It is so simple in appearance and so makes it seem all the more real.

The Mutants continued the return of the Doctor being a wanderer through time and space, and to get around the exile the Doctor was once again sent on a mission for the Time Lords, of course contradicting the reason behind the Doctor's exile on Earth in the first place.

The story is in many ways similar to the previous 'Time Lord mission' tale, **Colony on Space,** with the native inhabitants of a planet having more power than originally thought and the planet about to be taken over by a self-seeking Earth company. The story itself was ideally suited for the Master, but because of his appearance in the previous story and the similarities with **Colony in Space** I am grateful he did not appear.

The whole idea of a race evolving over a period of time due to the climatic conditions of the planet was, for me, intriguing, and based on an idea that seemed to be scientifically plausible, unlike the following story. It is interesting to note that Brian Aldiss has used almost the same idea in his recent Helliconia trilogy.

The story had two characters I thoroughly enjoyed watching, namely Stubbs and Cotton. They were virtually a typical Holmsian duo and it was nice to see Cotton played by a black actor, especially as the story could be seen as commenting on the South African apartheid problem. Another highlight of the story for me was the sequence where Jo was nearly sucked from the ship - a well-acted and equally well-executed and visually stunning scene, courtesy of veteran director Christopher Barry. I know the idea had been used four years previously in 2001: A Space Odyssey, but the impact of it happening was not lessened because of this.

If **The Curse of Peladon** was my personal highpoint of the season, then **The Time Monster** was the lowpoint. The story was obviously two episodes too long and from whichever angle you look at it the plot was simply too confusing, especially the capabilities of TOMTIT, which appeared to change with every episode so as to keep the plot moving. However this was a better story for the Master than **The Sea Devils** as he was the centre of the action both at the laboratory and in Atlantis, but as in his previous appearance this season he gets himself into a position where he loses control of the situation and in the end it is the Doctor who ironically saves him once more, while providing the series with yet another version of the destruction of Atlantis.

With this story the Master is freed from his 'exile' on Earth, and with the Doctor's exile lifted in the next story they are left to battle each other in the wider planes of time and space. If this season is seen to be marking time then **The Time Monster** is a good example of this. DOCTOR WHO can never afford to rest on its laurels as hardening of the arteries occurs and its age begins to show...

SEASON 10 (1972/73)
by Julian Knott

NOT MANY TELEVISION SERIES ever reach their tenth year, and so it is only fitting that when one does it should be re-instilled and re-invigorated with some of the enthusiasm that may have been eroded over the years. DOCTOR WHO was no exception. Few seasons have been as important to the developing of the DOCTOR WHO myth as Season Ten.

The season followed three years of predominantly Earth-based adventures, which were beginning to threaten to stifle the series' oft-cited 'flexibility of format'. But it is only to be expected, and it is only appropriate that the season begins - but does not linger long - on Earth.

Viewers' expectations had been raised not only by the now expected Radio Times cover article, but also by the pre-season trailers - using a new version of the theme. There is definitely an anniversary buzz to the atmosphere of **The Three Doctors,** which begins in a most tantalizing style, quickly developing a pace that should leave the most casual of viewer gripped. Both Doctor Tyler and Mr Ollis are cipher characters, to be read simply as stock scientist and plot device. Neither is destined for any mark of greatness or memorability. The appearance of the mysterious gell creatures must have led viewers to expect these uncharacteristically naff James Acheson designed creations to have been the main protagonists in the story beginning to unfold. Soon we begin to relalise the relative gravity of the situation, contrived expressly - it would appear - to bring the Doctor's past selves together. We are swiftly reintroduced to the Time Lords. It is an interesting look at a planet and people that we - the viewers - then knew practically nothing about. Unfortunately these are not the best circumstances in which to examine the Time Lords, represented as they are by a few old school-types flapping under pressure.

As soon as the Second Doctor is introduced, the series' internal continuity - a major strength of the Dicks/Letts era - begins to emerge, structuring the story and adding to the myths that it has helped to perpetrate. There are references to the UNIT involvement in **The Web of Fear** and **The Invasion,** helping to re-establish the Second Doctor's credentials and his suitability for the task ahead, for it is in the finest tradition of the Christmas pantomime - and the Wizard Of Oz - that the story progresses, with a villain in the mould of the Wizard himself; Omega.

Omega is an interesting character, his very existence maintained by will-power, and whose motive - revenge - stems from his abandonment by the race that we are meant to respect so much. "I should have been a God!", he cries. Omega's work enabled the Time Lords to **become** Time Lords, but it is not without some small agreement that we have to consider his outrage. Omega is established as a figure of great intelligence, a conjurer, a solar engineer, but is ultimately unmasked - literally - to reveal nothing. Beneath the story are demenstrably Bob Baker and Dave Martin, again plundering myths and legends, (cf **Underworld** and **The Horns of Nimon**).

To combat Omega, and to bring the celebrations to a head, the first two Doctors - an admission from the lips of the Time Lords which may yet prove contentious - are sent to aid the third. Both are portrayed as caricatures of their own personalities; Hartnell's intolerance and Troughton's impishness are exaggerated, creating two very different Doctors to contrast with the third. Omega's quest for freedom mirrors the Doctor's own imprisonment which is, as could have been predicted, lifted at the end of the story. But only after the splendid clash of mighty egos has created a shower of sparks. Merit star to Stephen Thorne's suitably OTT performance, which elicits both our sympathy and our fear. There are weaknesses to the story: both the gell-guards and Omega's planet - a mawkish palace of kitsch - are surely signs of the budget being stretched a little too thin; but overall the cake, immodestly iced though it is, is still a confection of great delight.

The revitalising process begun in **The Three Doctors** (where we see an impressively redesigned TARDIS set and, more importantly, a new confidence in both production style and in Pertwee's portrayal of the Doctor) also permeates the next story, **The Carnival of Monsters.**

One of Robert Holmes' most underrated and witty scripts - about as divorced from the Hammer-esque trappings that categorise much of his **DOCTOR WHO** work as he was able to produce - begins in a rather dodgy fashion: poor CSO and a rather unstable impression of Michael Wisher's Kalik ("The physiognomy is familiar..."). Soon, though, the viewers are taken through the initial SF wrappings of the story and enter the 1926 Holmes version of a Wodehouse BBC Classic Series adaption. The script is excellent, the plot thickens, and interest is recaptured.

To deliver what is incredible dialogue, credibly, you need competent actors and **Carnival of Monsters** is populated with such a cast: notable Tennial Evans, Leslie Dwyer and Cheryl Hall, although it is perhaps unfair to single out these among other convincing performances.

Carnival of Monsters manages to walk, just, on the better side between a bad production and a **DOCTOR WHO** classic. It creates fine dramatic situations, is suitably paced with terrific end of episode cliffhangers (particularly those of episodes one and three, which neatly counterpoint each other), and sports some superb effects, but it also features some unfortunate make-up, garish sets and a few really appalling effects such as the Plesiosaurus. **Carnival of Monsters,** within the usual budgetry restraints, does deliver, and helped by its tongue-in-cheek tone - in the same style as its virtual remake, **Nightmare of Eden** - also maintains the celebratory nature of the season to date.

Reportedly written to accommodate a few cheap spaceship models (who mentioned artistic integrity...?), **Frontier in Space** brings the season down to the space opera format that is typified by the similar **Space Pirates** and the tale of cosmic cowboys and injuns, **Colony in Space.** Its familiar stereotyped images of Earth Government, talk of Federations and Ambassadors (of Blakes Seven) are icons that sometimes infiltrate the style of the programme during the Dicks/Letts partnership. Their exploration of the themes of colonialism (explored by Holmes in **Carnival of Monsters)** and imperialism lead them here to a study in xenephobia. Both the protagonists in the threatened space war appear to be rational, civilised and honourable, but predominantly afraid of...each other. The message of racism - if indeed one is to read one from the story - is de-emphasised when the parties are united against a common enemy, in this case the Master and, as an afterthought, the Daleks.

It is difficult to forgive the many static and 'chatty' scenes in this story, and the Doctor's anecdote in episode two about "Medusoids" is particularly hard to stomach. There is, though, much to recommend the story: Delgado's most plotting Master; plenty of interesting location work; excellent design (especially in the Draconian make-up and costume); and many very good special effects. The problem that affects the story as a whole can be likened to a good meal: it is all very well being served with a well garnished feast, if the substance is underneath. Like Star Wars, in **Frontier in Space** there is too much flash, and not enough fire.

It is difficult to envisage how it was intended that this story was to be connected by all but the most tenuous of threads to that which followed it, a ploy which would - had it worked - have consolidated the unity of the season as a whole. The sloppy ending is a poor exit for the Master, a character that had - in the guise of Roger Delgado - formed the backbone of the series for the last two seasons.

Sloppy story-to-story continuity spoils the enjoyment of the beginning of **Planet of the Daleks,** and our delight at the Daleks' reappearance is pre-empted by their careless intrusion in the previous story. The standard device that Terry Nation employs - splitting the Doctor from his companion early in the story (cf **Death to the Daleks** and **Genesis of the Daleks)** - here becomes predictable and boring. The story's oft-cited plot similarities to **The Daleks** become secondary to all but the most determined, due to the telling here of a ripping good yarn. As a story that captitalises so heavily on reworking the series' past, it relies surprisingly on the series' continuity, flaunting the dangers of being 'found out'.

Scattered among the bones of the plot is new meat: the ice planet, cryogenically storing an army of Daleks; and the sub-plot with the invisible Daleks, revealed so excellently in one of the best-ever episode cliffhangers, but not exploited to the full and ultimately discarded (after all, who would want to watch a whole story involving invisible Daleks ?). The Daleks are indeed back, with a style and force that is both impressive and less embarrassing. They are shown as efficient , organised, logical and utterly ruthless (in order to eliminate a mere handful of rebels, Supreme Command orders the creation of a bacteria that will destroy all non-immunised life on the planet!). The Master is conspicuous by his absence - his contribution might have held the twelve-episode plan together, and may have added just that extra spark of originality that **Planet of the Daleks** needed to boost it above **The Three Doctors** as the most interesting story of the season.

Overrated beyond what is considered to be acceptable, **The Green Death** is a disease that strikes slowly, gradually numbing first the gluteus maximus, and eventually spreading over a two and a half hour period to the brain. A little harsh ?! But the story, like UFO from which it borrows much of its hardware, has dated badly. Green politics may now be popular and - oh, so! - trendy again, but the days of the hippy commune are long gone. Its themes of Big Business, of multi-nationals, of capitalism, are still relevant, but the structure of the story requires the pill to be taken whole, bitter taste an' all.

There is a story here, but its patronising telling makes one all the more resentful of it. There are boyo Welshmen, simplistic them-and-us politics, military numbskulls and a Star Trek-like megalomaniac computer. All only serve to insult the viewer's intelligence; although any computer that hears its days of glory being acted out of the strains of the 1812 does endear me to it!

An odd mix here, again, of great and lousy special effects. The CSO is as bad as in **Underworld,** and the model shots are as good as **City of Death,** but it needed a good, well-paced story to go with them. It is the "archetypal Pertwee story", some have said, but it is early Earth-bound UNIT style Pertwee and, as such, it goes against the grain of the rest of the season, although it may have extra appeal to some nostalgists. With Jo conveniently married off to some trendy liberal, the foundations of the UNIT era are beginning to erode, the spell is broken and the magic dispersed.

So, sadly, end the celebrations of Season Ten: ultimately, it is the viewers that suffer for the strange type of love story that **The Green Death** is, for the Pertwee production team will never be on such form again...

SEASON 11 (1973/74)

by Craig Hinton

1974 was one of the great 'watershed' years for DOCTOR WHO, matching only 1966 and 1969 for the momentous impact on the series that would permanently divert its course. The common denominator of these years is obvious: once more, the central character would undergo that mysterious transmogrification that marked DOCTOR WHO as being unique...regeneration was nigh. Yet was this the only reason ?

Previous regenerations, although not exactly executed under a blanket of secrecy, had not been announced under the fanfare of publicity that blazed about Season Eleven. The previous year had seen **DOCTOR WHO** receive unparalleled press coverage: the Tenth Anniversary produced a tidal wave of both interest and merchandise, with the beginning of the Target book series, a flood of toys and games unmatched since the Dalekmania period of the early Sixties, and the now legendary Radio Times Anniversary Special. For the first time, fans of the series now had more than just the vague rumours of the tabloids and the Countdown strip to go on: flanked by both Sarah Jane Smith and the Sontaran Linx, a single column detailed the titles of each and every story from the forthcoming season, and like the best hors-d'oeuvre, the oh-so-brief information simply whetted the appetite, drumming up the sort of enthusiasm for the new series that any present drama series can only dream of. The stage was set...

December 15th, 1973: **DOCTOR WHO** erupted onto BBC1 in a spiral starburst, as Bernard Lodge's new graphics hurled aside faithful howlaround in favour of state-of-the-art slit scan. Pertwee's almost smug smile said it all - **I am** the Doctor - before the new logo (and the veritable blitzkrieg of publicity) ushered the viewer back into Wonderland. But was Wonderland becoming tarnished ?

Pertwee's tenure as the Doctor had begun in Quatermass style, a more adult slant bringing an icy realism to the series. After Season Seven this was moderated, but Pertwee **WHO** never lost that 'Earthbound horror' atmosphere: that element was vital to the way that the series was then constructed. Agreed, the viewer would sometimes be transported far from the comfort of Ealing Broadway or Portsmouth to the exotic worlds of Exarius or Draconia; but Pertwee's man-from-the-Establishment figure gelled most easily when Outer Space came to Earth - not vice versa.

While the Doctor was in exile on Earth, this was not a problem: his forays into the Time Vortex were rare, and all the more appreciated for that. The return of the Dematerialization Circuit and its attendant freedom meant that no longer did the Doctor have any convincing reason to stay and help UNIT. It was this dilemma that undermined Season Ten, and became embarrassingly obvious in Season Eleven.

Although **The Time Warrior** began in a familiar mould - strange goings-on at a research establishment - the reinstatement of the TARDIS as a vehicle rather than a raison d'être meant that the Doctor could face his adversary on alien territory rather than waiting for it to come to him. As opposed to the previous season, in which the Doctor took advantage of his freedom, this story saw a rather unhappy attempt to merge old and new - without particular success. On one hand it bore all the hallmarks of a typical UNIT story; yet these hallmarks did not make good bedfellows with time-travelling aliens and journeys into the past. Unlike the similar **Day of the Daleks,** the Doctor's ability to travel under his own steam left a feeling of rootlessness: where did he belong, with UNIT or with the TARDIS ? The end of the story made this clear: the portion of the plot set in the Dark Ages was tied up satisfactorily, leaving UNIT all but forgotten as the scream into the end titles began. To whom did the Doctor owe allegiance ?

Back on Earth, and on familiar ground: London under attack and Pertwee with UNIT. **Invasion of the Dinosaurs** was a typical early Pertwee potboiler that would have been at home in any of his seasons. Marred by terrible special effects, enriched by superb acting and character development by all concerned, the story seemed seeemed solely to exist to fill up six episodes. The introduction of the Whomobile was a clear pointer to the viewer that Pertwee's love of gadgetry was about to be given free reign. Having lured the public back to the homely UNIT setting, the time had come for another excursion. Having finally reached Metebelis Three, the Doctor decides that Sarah needs a TARDIS Awayday to Florana...

Having regained Terry Nation's permission to use the Daleks, the production team had obviously chosen to use them as often as possible before that permission was once again withdrawn. In stunning silver livery, the Daleks tried to outvy the intrusive saxaphone incidental music: without their weaponry, their characters once more showed traces of Machiavellian cunning buried under years of chanting "Exterminate". For all their guile, however, the Daleks demonstrated that without a cohesive, entertaining plot they became nothing more than standard **DOCTOR WHO** monsters - and such a plot was what **Death to the Daleks** lacked. Tired and hackneyed, the story trundled on to a pretty clichéd end: traitorous human realises the error of his ways just in time to die heroically and save his friends. Rather too familiar.

Having introduced one new 'old enemy' and featured the greatest of them all, the production team decided to bring yet another back from the vaults for the **Monster of Peladon.** Looking unfortunately very tatty in seven year old costumes designed for other actors, the Ice Warriors still managed to maintain that air of menace that had made them so popular in the Sixties - when they appeared, that was. **Monster of Peladon** seemed to drag over six episodes, introducing - then ignoring - plot developments, and leaving the 'cruel Martian invaders' until the last moment. It was familiar space opera, creaking under weak special effects and mediocre direction from Lennie Mayne. The audience, however, accepted this because they knew what was coming...

During the transmission of **Invasion of the Dinosaurs,** it had been publically announced that after five years, Pertwee had chosen to stand down from the rôle of the Doctor. Unlike the induced hysteria that greeted later Doctors' resignations, this one was treated calmly by the press, without spurious conjecture as to Pertwee's successor. By the time that **Planet of the Spiders** was broadcast, the public knew that virtual unknown Tom Baker would be the new Doctor: and enthusiasts waited expectantly to find out why.

Planet of the Spiders combined all the various elements that had characterised Pertwee's reign: UNIT, gadgetry, alien invasion...yet Season Eleven's uneasy transition of **DOCTOR WHO** from terrestrial horror to unearthly adventure did not particularly welcome the plot. The Doctor seemed constantly ill-at-ease in the once familiar environment of his laboratory: the oft-mentioned 'UNIT family' no longer the happy band that it had once been. Sarah Jane Smith was a journalist, Captain Yates had turned traitor and had suffered a breakdown... **Planet of the Spiders** saw UNIT a broken home.

The loss of Roger Delgado was probably never felt more than in this story. Original planning had featured the Master in the Lupton rôle, revealing himself to be the Doctor's brother in a spectacular climax that would have meant the Master's death and the Doctor's regeneration. Even though such elements never grew beyond that stage, the human Lupton clearly played a rôle destined for evil not of this Earth.

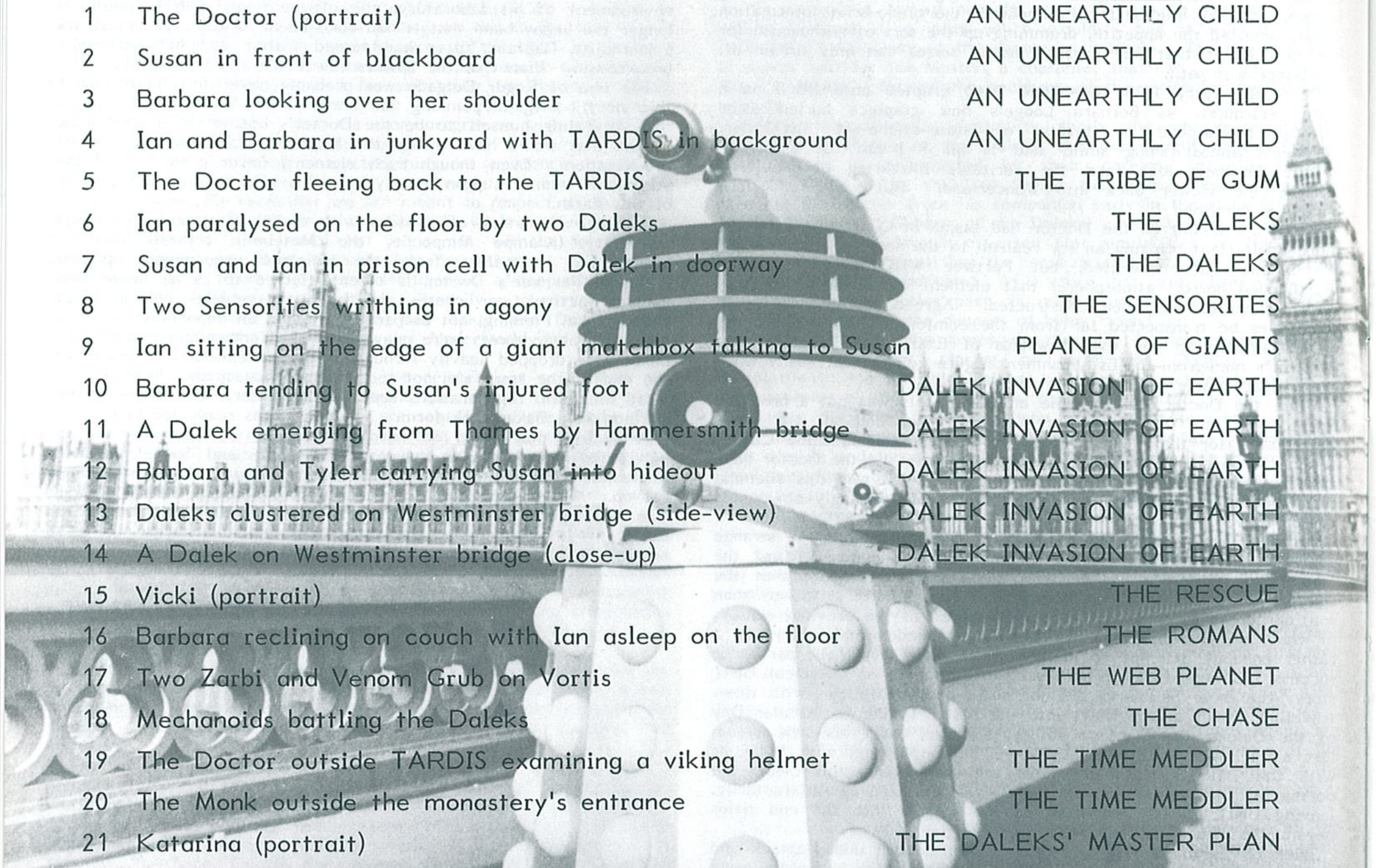
Although the story effervesces with clever plotting and beautiful continuity (K'ampo Rinpoche, the Metebelis crystal), like its predecessor it suffers from the weight of unnecessary episodes. Although Pertwee's Doctor is often referred to as a 'James Bond man of action', car chases and futuristic vehicles belong in the world of Ian Fleming, not as padding in such an important story.

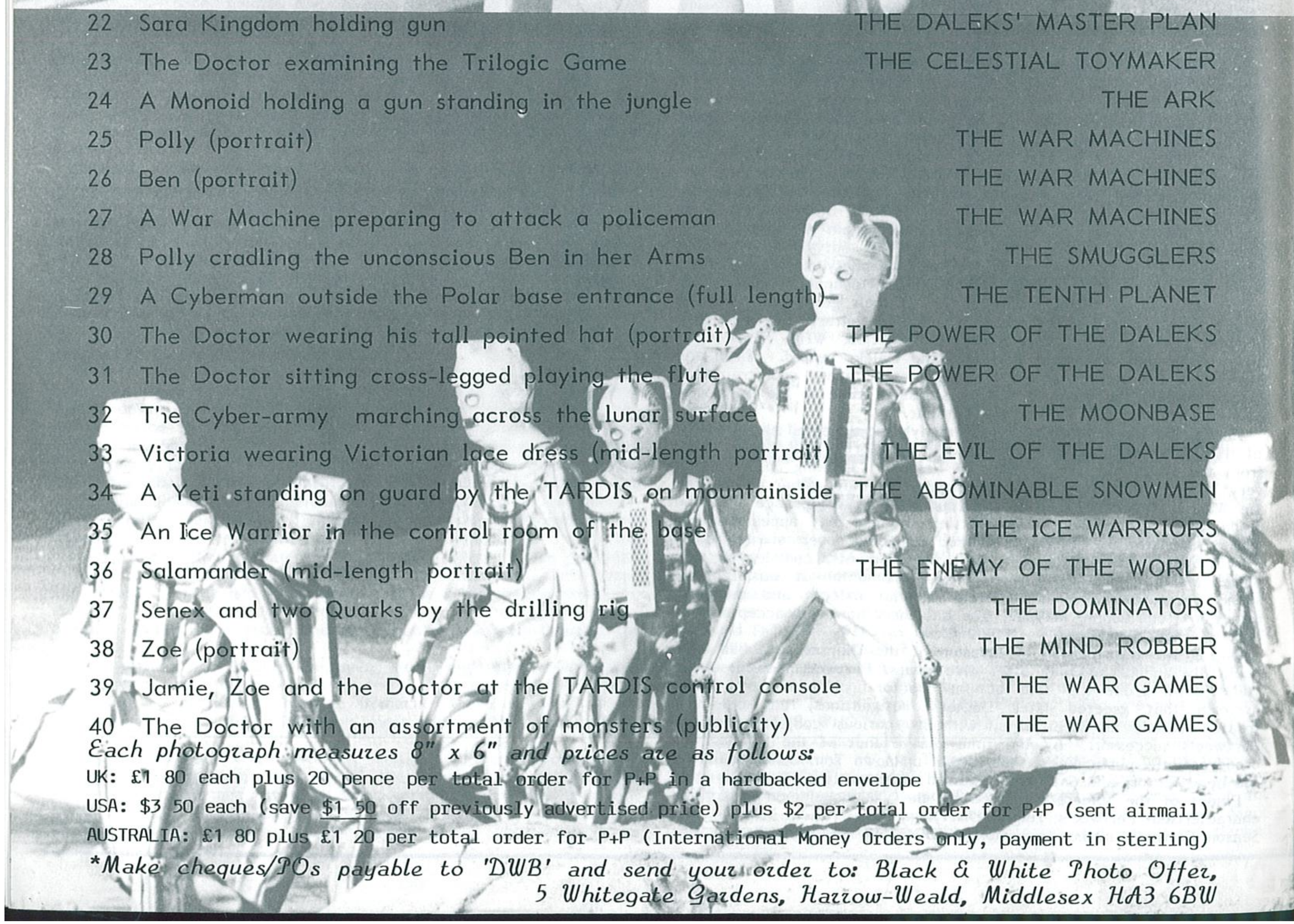
In case any viewers were unaware of the forthcoming regeneration, clues were dropped heavily throughout the six episodes, ensuring that the end of the story was not too much of a surprise. In one of the most simplistic regenerations seen in the series, Jon Pertwee faded out and Tom Baker took form. The series was ready for him.

A season that tried so hard to prepare its audience for the inevitable return to 'an adventure in Time and Space' found it impossible to shake off the UNIT scenario that it had painstakingly set up. While attempting to reach for the heavens, **DOCTOR WHO** was reminded that, with Pertwee, it was only too deeply rooted on Earth. With Tom Baker the stars beckoned. We were in for a bumpy ride...

END OF PART ONE...

DUE TO OVERWHELMING DEMAND, we are offering readers a final opportunity to purchase black and white photographs from the WHOMOBILIA collection before the BBC-licensed photo-service closes in the New Year. ALL final orders MUST be in no later that January 31st 1989





1	The Doctor (portrait)	AN UNEARTHLY CHILD
2	Susan in front of blackboard	AN UNEARTHLY CHILD
3	Barbara looking over her shoulder	AN UNEARTHLY CHILD
4	Ian and Barbara in junkyard with TARDIS in background	AN UNEARTHLY CHILD
5	The Doctor fleeing back to the TARDIS	THE TRIBE OF GUM
6	Ian paralysed on the floor by two Daleks	THE DALEKS
7	Susan and Ian in prison cell with Dalek in doorway	THE DALEKS
8	Two Sensorites writhing in agony	THE SENSORITES
9	Ian sitting on the edge of a giant matchbox talking to Susan	PLANET OF GIANTS
10	Barbara tending to Susan's injured foot	DALEK INVASION OF EARTH
11	A Dalek emerging from Thames by Hammersmith bridge	DALEK INVASION OF EARTH
12	Barbara and Tyler carrying Susan into hideout	DALEK INVASION OF EARTH
13	Daleks clustered on Westminster bridge (side-view)	DALEK INVASION OF EARTH
14	A Dalek on Westminster bridge (close-up)	DALEK INVASION OF EARTH
15	Vicki (portrait)	THE RESCUE
16	Barbara reclining on couch with Ian asleep on the floor	THE ROMANS
17	Two Zarbi and Venom Grub on Vortis	THE WEB PLANET
18	Mechanoids battling the Daleks	THE CHASE
19	The Doctor outside TARDIS examining a viking helmet	THE TIME MEDDLER
20	The Monk outside the monastery's entrance	THE TIME MEDDLER
21	Katarina (portrait)	THE DALEKS' MASTER PLAN
22	Sara Kingdom holding gun	THE DALEKS' MASTER PLAN
23	The Doctor examining the Trilogic Game	THE CELESTIAL TOYMAKER
24	A Monoid holding a gun standing in the jungle	THE ARK
25	Polly (portrait)	THE WAR MACHINES
26	Ben (portrait)	THE WAR MACHINES
27	A War Machine preparing to attack a policeman	THE WAR MACHINES
28	Polly cradling the unconscious Ben in her Arms	THE SMUGGLERS
29	A Cyberman outside the Polar base entrance (full length)	THE TENTH PLANET
30	The Doctor wearing his tall pointed hat (portrait)	THE POWER OF THE DALEKS
31	The Doctor sitting cross-legged playing the flute	THE POWER OF THE DALEKS
32	The Cyber-army marching across the lunar surface	THE MOONBASE
33	Victoria wearing Victorian lace dress (mid-length portrait)	THE EVIL OF THE DALEKS
34	A Yeti standing on guard by the TARDIS on mountainside	THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMEN
35	An Ice Warrior in the control room of the base	THE ICE WARRIORS
36	Salamander (mid-length portrait)	THE ENEMY OF THE WORLD
37	Senex and two Quarks by the drilling rig	THE DOMINATORS
38	Zoe (portrait)	THE MIND ROBBER
39	Jamie, Zoe and the Doctor at the TARDIS control console	THE WAR GAMES
40	The Doctor with an assortment of monsters (publicity)	THE WAR GAMES

Each photograph measures 8" x 6" and prices are as follows:

UK: £1 80 each plus 20 pence per total order for P+P in a hardbacked envelope

USA: $3 50 each (save $1 50 off previously advertised price) plus $2 per total order for P+P (sent airmail)

AUSTRALIA: £1 80 plus £1 20 per total order for P+P (International Money Orders only, payment in sterling)

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dwb

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'WHO TAKES TO THE STAGE

REPORT BY ROBERT COPE

WITH THE PROSPECT of a DOCTOR WHO movie ever reaching the big screen appearing to fade into oblivion with still no confirmation from Coast to Coast of a lead actor (they have denied press stories claiming Dudley Moore had won the rôle), fans will instead be able to see the series as an exciting new stage production from next March.

It has been exclusively revealed to **DWB** that Mark Furness Productions - one of the country's leading theatrical producers - will be staging a nationwide tour of a stage version of the show early next year.

Although it is still in the scripting stage with a working title of, simply, 'Doctor Who', it will be penned by present television production members Ben Aaronovitch and Andrew Cartmel, both writing for the stage for the first time.

A spokesman for Mark Furness told us: "It will be an extremely big tour, one of the most ambitious that we have ever attempted.

"It will feature lots of special effects including laser tunnels and specialised lighting.

"Casting is not yet confirmed but we hope to be able to announce our stage Doctor in the New Year."

The tour will kick off at the Wimbledon Theatre, London, on March 13th (box office; 01-540 0362), and will then proceed on a nationwide tour taking in most of the country's biggest theatres.

A full tour list and more details hopefully next issue...

'SILVER NEMESIS' TOPS SIX MILLION!

FOR THE FIRST TIME since Season 22, DOCTOR WHO has passed the six million mark in the ratings with episode one of 'Silver Nemesis'.

This well-publcised episode was appropriately broadcast on the 25th anniversary and the news comes as some consolation after thirty-five episodes in a row peaking well below this figure, made all the more respectable by its positioning opposite Coronation Street which regularly tops sixteen million.

In fact, the combination of Coronation Street **and DOCTOR WHO** is proving to be a force to reckon with as the programmes simultaneously screened on BBC2 and Channel 4 barely nudge **one** million viewers!

However, one episode which didn't do as well was part two of **The Happiness Patrol** which rated so low it disappeared from the top hundred listings altogether! Here is an update on how the latest series is performing:

REMEMBRANCE(4)	5.0m	(96)
HAPPINESS'(1)	5.3m	(96)
HAPPINESS'(2)	4.6m	(unlisted)
HAPPINESS'(3)	5.3m	(88)
SILVER NEMESIS(1)	6.1m	(76)

***Episode one of 'Remembrance' achieved 5.5m, not 5.4 as stated.**

Listener
DR WHO
Another millennium
BOWLS
WIN $15,000 OF PHILIPS ELECTRONICS

DOCTOR WHO celebrated its silver anniversary in style...in New Zealand!

Between November 19-25th TVNZ2 featured a series of repeats sure to make any fan green with envy, rounding off the celebrations with an omnibus edition of **Silver Nemesis,** with episodes two and three receiving their world première!

In order, the stories shown were **The Dalek Invasion of Earth, The Seeds of Death**(with the Troughton/Pertwee changeover tagged on the end), **The Five Doctors, Revelation of the Daleks** and **Silver Nemesis,** with all but **Revelation** shown in omnibus form. To mark the event the New Zealand equivalent of our Radio Times - Listener - boasted a colourful cover featuring an array of Doctors and monsters.

New Zealand fan Gregory Marshall told **DWB:**"TVNZ have done a great job and obviously decided not to feature Jon Pertwee or Tom Baker stories as we have had full repeats of them over the last 3½ years.

"They even filmed special trailers featuring Katy Manning with clips from **Dalek Invasion of Earth** and **The Five Doctors** which were shown in the week prior to the anniversary."

OZ FANS CELEBRATE!

AUSTRALIAN FANS are rejoicing at ABC's decision to scrap plans to cancel DOCTOR WHO after favourable reaction to Sylvester McCoy.

After giving the series a change of slot, the state-owned company warned that unless the series improved on its 2-3% rating then they would drop the series. But the first of Sylvester's adventures, up to **Remembrance,** were seen by 5-6% of the viewing population, a vast improvement, and not far short of the 8-10% that peak-time programmes on the channel average. ABC are now planning to show the rest of Season 25 in the not too distant future.

SEASON 26

BEN AARONOVITCH has penned the opening story for Season 26, provisionally entitled 'The Pools of Lanyth'.

The story is a 'sword and sorcery' tale set in the mystical Arthurian days and is said to be as impressive - if not more so - than Ben's first outing on the series with **Remembrance of the Daleks.**

And in a first for **DOCTOR WHO,** a rock band has been approached to provide the incidental score. They are Hawkind - a group well-liked by script editor Andrew Cartmel - and well known for their support of science fiction having worked with such writers as Michael Moorcock and Richard Calvert on some of their concept albums and also having played at a series of SF conventions. They are particularly noted for their Arthurian works, The Elryck being an obvious example.

Graeme Harper reportedly had to turn down the offer to direct the story due to his commitments on ITV's Boon next year, and it is highly unlikely Chris Clough will be contributing next season as he also has other projects lined up. **(Thanks to Phil McConnety)**

JN-T STAYS!

JOHN NATHAN-TURNER is staying, and that's official!

As exclusively reported by **DWB** as far back as September, despite assurances to the contrary and a 'farewell' party last August, JN-T will oversee Season 26 (his **ninth**) as producer!

John confirmed his continuing tenure on the 25th anniversary cruise in Miami and Sylvester McCoy was delighted to announce that "JN-T is coming back as producer for Season 26" to an audience of 500+ fans at New Jersey Network's première of the **Silver Nemesis** Documentary. **(See inside...)**

DWB 61 NOT TO BE SOLD SEPARATELY

DREAM-WATCH BULLETIN

FROM 1989, 'DWB' will officially stand for DREAM-WATCH BULLETIN.

This is because from the January issue, as a trial run, **DWB** will be four pages longer, and the extra pages will be used to cover British television fantasy shows in general.

DWB will still have the same level of informed **DOCTOR WHO** content as it's ever had but by incorporating the extra pages **DWB** will no longer fall into the **'DOCTOR WHO** fanzine' bracket. This is partly due to rumblings from within the BBC which suggest that Enterprises are becoming increasingly concerned about the number of glossy A4 fanzines exclusively based on **DOCTOR WHO.** Although **DOCTOR WHO** Magazine editor John Freeman told us he himself doesn't view fanzines as a threat to Marvel's license, BBC Enterprises may feel obliged to act should a fan-magazine become too popular.

Therefore **DWB** is acting purely as a safeguard, and also because we feel that, after five years, we should be broadening our horizons.

Gary Wales is reworking the current logo to tie-in with the change and the price for the new-look 20-page **DWB** will be only £1.50, with the specials still at £2.95

NEXT ISSUE: Exclusive on Jon Pertwee, Barry Letts and Terrance Dicks' new sci-fi project; 'Silver Nemesis' review; David Banks on the Cyberbook; 1988 Readers Poll/25th anniversary Series Survey and much more.

COMING SOON: Interviews with Jon Pertwee, Sophie Aldred and many more...

A LETTER FROM AMERICA
By Kathleen Toth

THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY has come and gone with little fanfare in the USA.

Unless you happen to live in the viewing area served by New Jersey Network PBS or could afford to sail off on the **DOCTOR WHO** cruise from Miami. There have been no other major events since August and none are planned again before March. There has continued to be no releases from Lionheart or its club, and nothing new from DWFCA. Most of the fan newsletters are coming at decreasing intervals. Given that the start of the anniversary season looks so promising in **Remembrance of the Daleks,** Lionheart seems to be missing a good opportunity to regain attention, especially with the new Star Trek series having made a very lackluster return to the small screen with its season debut.

The New Jersey Network convention was held in Newark on November 19th with 550 in attendance to see Sylvester McCoy and Sophie Aldred. The network premièred its documentary on the making of **Silver Nemesis** and hopes to sell it to other PBS stations for **DOCTOR WHO** promotions during the necessary periods of PBS fundraising that all stations go through several times a year. Sylvester and Sophie were on the air during NJ Net's fundraiser in the evening following the day's convention from 5.30pm until late into the night. In all the network raised $35,000 and McCoy got to bed at 3am, having to get up early the next morning to go on the Miami cruise. Hopefully five days at sea was a proper restorative!

About 100 fans signed on for the cruise and the guest list remained limited to JNT, Gary Downie, Nick Courtney and Sylvester. Efforts to replace some of the guests who had had to cancel - such as Colin Baker and Janet Fielding - were unsuccessful. Anthony Ainley suffers from sea sickness and Louise Jameson and Tom Baker were contacted too late to do it. Although the Caribbean was being visited by a rare late tropical storm, a good time was reportedly had by all attendees. The organisers hope to have some shorter cruises in the future.

For those of you still wondering if they should encourage their PBS stations to buy the New Jersey documentary, do not do so with the expectation that this will be any sort of 25th anniversary salute to **DOCTOR WHO.** It is more like A Day in the Life of a Television Producer. There is no discussion on the history and development of **DOCTOR WHO** and very little use of clips from old stories. What material is shown is mostly drawn up from the Davison era. There is some material on changes in the Cybermen, but this is simply lifted from an old BBC programme, as is a scene of Tom Baker rehearsing for **Talons of Weng Chiang.** The only time he and other Doctors are seen is in the brief flashback sequence from **Earthshock.** The bulk of the programme deals with the jobs of the various behind-the-camera people such as the director, production unit manager, make-up person and so on. Unless you are interested in scoping out a career in broadcasting (with the BBC), energy might be better spent lobbying your station to buy unbroadcast episodes to air as pledge-time specials.

SYLVESTER McCOY returns to the Lyric Hammersmith this Christmas for another run of The Zoo Of Tranquility.

Billed as "a fun alternative to Mother Goose and the Ugly Sisters", the production is worth catching just for Sylvester's zany portrayal of Sir Vester!

All tickets are priced at £5 and the play runs from December 20-31st with performances between Mon-Fri (8pm), Saturday matinée (4.30pm, no evening performances).

WEEKEND
The man behind the silver mask
CYBERMEN

PHOTO: SHELDON COLLINS

DAVID BANKS and Andrew Skilleter were at the Westminster comic mart on December 3rd for the public unveiling of the Cyberbook.

Public reaction was as positive as our preview in **DWB**#59 with its production confirming the work as a labour of love. Many people agreed that it was one of the finest **DOCTOR WHO** publications ever released deserving of a place alongside The Radio Times Specials and Peter Haining's A Celebration on any true fan's bookshelf. You can still purchase your copy by sending a cheque payable to Who Dares Publishing for £14.95/US$36/Canada:US$36/Australia:£22.50 (inclusive of P+P) to: Who Dares Publishing, 3 Durrant Road, Bounemouth BH2 6NE.

Reviewed next issue...

DEREK MARTINUS **was present during the official première of the 'Ice Warriors' episodes at the NFT on December 3rd.**

The episodes were undoubtedly the highpoint of the weekend and most people seemed to agree they lived up to expectations. Many people noted the particularly fine form Patrick Troughton was in and the portrayal of the Ice Warriors themselves who were handled magnificently and quite unlike their future appearances (here, for example, they were often seen to laugh among themselves!).

Jon Pertwee took to the stage before **The Sea Devils** commenced screening rounding off a slick and successful day for the NFT.

JOHN PEEL's Dalek Book has been set back yet again, this time till March, reportedly because Terry Nation's agent Roger Hancock has levied a charge of **£25** per Dalek per photo! As the standard fee for a human's likeness in a book is only £15, the BBC have insisted that they, too, should receive £25 per actor, per photo!

MICHAEL GRADE has struck again! The man who has gone on record as saying he "Doesn't understand children's programmes" has cancelled any further series after the new run of 13 episodes of Worzel Gummidge - starring Jon Pertwee - starts in the New Year.

DAPOL have been selling rejects of their Bonnie Langford models to a Cheshire gun club...which are using them for target practice!

CONVENTION-GOERS can look forward to a packed programme of events during 1989. The DWAS, under new convention organiser Andrew Beech, are holding a one-day event in March based on Season 25 with a two-day event in November. As well as an event in Bristol (see back page ad), the west country will also have Carousel in June and the new 'Leisure Hive' convention, Honeycomb. The organisers of the latter inform us that places are filling up quickly so it would be advisable to register as soon as possible (ad in **DWB**#59). And after the success of DoctorCon in August, the same group are planning ZYGCON 26 for next August. **Look out for the ads in these pages over the coming months...**

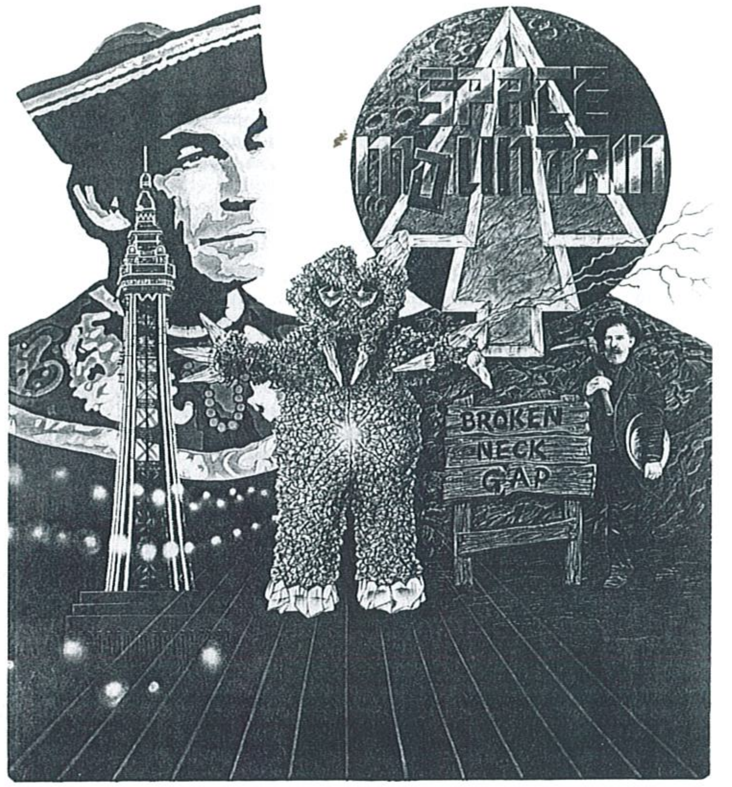
THE SUN 'newspaper' recently reported that the BBC threatened legal action against Myth Makers producer Andy Grant who had planned to release a cassette of the series' music. On a more optimistic note, the team have scored a notable coup in signing up Tom Baker for a forthcoming release.

CHANNEL 4 are negotiating the rights to screen a series of classic BBC shows. However with Michael Grade as their new controller, it is debatable whether **DOCTOR WHO** will merit a slot...

BARB, the official auditors of television ratings, are under pressure to widen their sample of 3,000 homes to at least 6,000 before their TV audience contract comes up for renewal next year.

THE NIGHTMARE FAIR

PUBLISHED MAY 1989 BY W.H.ALLEN



ONE OF THE NICE THINGS (and there aren't that many) about being a DOCTOR WHO bookcover artist is that one occasionally gets to read a novelisation months and months - eight, in fact - before anybody else. In some cases, 'The Chase' being the most recent example, this is a real bonus. In others - and I refuse to say which one in particular - it can be a real chore!

When I finished reading **The Nightmare Fair** (the opening story of the original aborted Season 23) for the first time I'm afraid it had fallen into the second category in my opinion. There had been some interesting bits in it, naturally, but on the whole I'd found it disappointing. I wondered what all the fuss was about and dismissed the book as a simple tale of relativity and candy floss.

However, I had to read it again - a task I wasn't looking forward to and one that I actually put off for several days - in order to make some notes in preparation for the cover artwork, there being, of course, no reference photographs to work from. Having just put the book down for a second time I'm pleased, nay delighted, that it really is very good indeed; a bonus, you might say. I should point out at this stage that I wasn't reading the book you'll find on the shelf next May but the **manuscript**, all 214 sheets of it. Therefore, some of what I'm about to say may not apply once Jo Thurm has gone over it with her trusty blue pencil. I wonder if she'll correct the bit about the sonic screwdriver...?

For obvious reasons I won't give away the plot, suffice to say that it's set in Blackpool in 1988 and features the Celestial Toymaker; two (three ?) facts with which I'm sure you're all well acquainted. As Ian Briggs is apparently so fond of saying, you'll just have to "Read the novelisation" to find out what happens. (Well, Ian, I've read yours and frankly...oh dear, what a give-away!).

To be honest, though, the plot is no great shakes and I found myself thinking that, like the Master's antics in **The King's Demons,** this was "small-time villainy" by previous standards. As you might expect the villainy in question is all to do with games and in **The Nightmare Fair** it's a particular **kind** of game...that's all I'm saying. Putting this minor criticism to one side, it is still a nice idea and one which, taken to its logical (and deadly) conclusion is quite chilling.

My main criticism of the storyline is that the Doctor and Peri, following their inevitable separation, spend far too much time being locked up (which is the Doctor's fate) and (in Peri's case) wandering around and being chased by the obligatory bad guys.

Peri, poor girl, gets lumbered with someone I can only describe as an absolute prat. His name is Kevin Stoney...yes, **Kevin Stoney** (he's dead, isn't he ?!) who, for some reason, has a brother named Geoff **Bickerstaff.** Any parental interactions that may have caused this anomaly are not explained. Kevin is given little to do except go on at every opportunity about his life and background, information that is, thankfully, not actually related in conversation apart from the odd sentence here and there.

As to the other characters, Graham Williams has captured the Sixth Doctor's persona extremely well, far better than any of the other **real** novelisations in fact which I found somewhat surprising. (That's supposed to be a compliment, by the way!). The Doctor is brash, abrasive, full of gusto and basically 'loud' and yet, when the Toymaker gets his comeuppance (and to find out what that is you will, of course, have to "Read the novelisation") the Doctor displays compassion, sympathy and a great sense of sorrow - characteristics that, sadly, were rarely witnessed from this particular incarnation on screen.

The best 'scenes' are, undoubtedly, those between the Doctor and the Toymaker. Incidentally, the Toymaker isn't referred to by that name until the fifth of the nine chapters; up to then he's mostly called 'The Mandarin'. Their battle of wits and words is a delight to read and, I'm sure, would have been superb on the box. That Grade person has a lot to answer for...

As we've been promised, the Toymaker's origins are explained, but only to a certain extent which I think is good as it means that he still manages to escape with an air of mystery intact. I've used the word 'escape' so as to deliberately mislead, you...oops, "Read the novelisation"!

I presume that Graham Williams has let his imagination run riot a little in writing this book as it contains three chapters that, within the constraints of a BBC budget, would have been difficult to recreate realistically (not that it's ever stopped them trying). These consist of an unnamed pink cloud, a Ventusan nick-named 'Mechanic' and SB 5496/74 who is an android of sorts. If you're wondering what SB stands for, "Read the...", oh, alright then, it doesn't stand for anything!

The 'Mechanic', a spider-come-crab monstrosity, and SB (for short) lend a hand in the closing chapter of the story, enabling the Doctor to outwit his opponent - and to understand my little pun you know what you're going to have to do, don't you ? These three were all good guys...clouds...but, going back to what I said before, the monsters that feature in the story would give a special effects designer a headache-and-a-half!

SB is a remarkably wacky character who could quite easily have fallen out of a book by Douglas Adams. Alternatively, he could quite easily fall **into** a book by Douglas Adams where he would feel more at home than Slartibartfast. This leads me to wonder whether SB is a by-product of the Williams/Adams era of the programme that the author has resurrected for his story. The writing style is, in itself, very much like that of the hitch-hiking gentleman, both in nature and content (could the pink cloud be Williams' version of Adams' hyper-intelligent shade of the colour blue, perhaps ?) or, put another way, if DNA ever condescends to write **The Pirate Planet** and **City of Death,** I imagine they'll be written in a similar fashion to this.

Now then, if you've read Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency and found it as much of a chore as I did, don't be put off by what I've just said. **The Nightmare Fair** is ten times better. More, probably.

The interesting thing about reading the novelisation of an un-televised story is that you find yourself casting the actors in the various rôles. If **The Nightmare Fair** ever does make it to our screens - and in these days of 'oddball' stories I don't see why it shouldn't following the necessary rewrites - then the prime contender for the part of Shardlow has just got to be John Scott Martin. If you've seen John in the flesh you'll understand what I mean when you...perform a certain function next May.

Read it, read it, read it...enjoy it. I'm sure you will.

But you'll hate the cover!

Now, if you'll excuse me, I've just had an idea for a slogan to print on a sweatshirt...

ALISTER PEARSON

JUBILEE PITIFULLY IGNORED

Kevin Mobberley, West Midlands (17-11-88)
So this is the Radio Times' "very special" anniversary celebrations; a badly written two-page article. No special publication like five and fifteen years ago and not even a special cover. The cover that was used publicised a series that had **already** started. Perhaps the Radio Times did have plans for more extensive coverage, but then received orders from above to drop them. On television things have been **worse!** We have received **no** repeats, **no** documentary, Season 25 hasn't even been decently scheduled and those pathetic five minute slots on Breakfast Time and Daytime Live left me speechless. Isn't it sad to see a series that has given the BBC so much be pitifully ignored in this way ?

Now that it seems uncertain that JNT is leaving after all, concentrated letter writing is more important than ever, and I can only echo Gary Phillips' letter back in May's issue: a change of script editor too is not only important, it is **vital.** I can think of no better replacement production team than those responsible for South of the Border, not only because this is an excellent series, but because I feel **DOCTOR WHO** needs to return to being an action/adventure in the same vein. The damage done in recent years is too great to allow **DOCTOR WHO** to be experimental and it needs to re-establish itself in the public eye as a high quality family action drama in the next two years. Only then can it afford to experiment with new ideas.

"CARTMEL'S INFLUENCE TO BLAME"

Jason Wilson, Norwich (19-11-88)
It is disturbing to note the decline in **DOCTOR WHO**'s standards since Andrew Cartmel assumed the mantle of script editor. Since **Time and the Rani** the programme has been mainly mediocre with only **Paradise Towers** and **Remembrance of the Daleks** coming even half-way to being classic **WHO.** It **must** be Cartmel's influence that is giving us stories such as the weak **Delta and the Bannermen** and the appalling **Happiness Patrol.** He has almost totally destroyed the high standards laid down by Christopher Bidmead and Eric Saward, and it is sad that a producer who once upon a time gave us some of the finest production values ever should even consider having Cartmel involved with his show. Does JNT still care about **DOCTOR WHO** ? Five years ago he would have told Graeme Curry where to stick his script and filled the gap with a story by Johnny Byrne or Chris Bidmead.

It is not enough for JNT to leave (if indeed he does) - Cartmel (and Gary Downie for that matter) must go too. The current crop of directors must also be phased out (with the possible exception of Andrew Morgan who is starting to show promise). Sylvester and Sophie showed what they could do together in **Remembrance of the Daleks** and were the **only** good things about **The Happiness Patrol.** Put them under the thumb of someone like Terrance Dicks and they could turn out to be one of the best Doctor/companion teams ever. Let us hope that the BBC do appoint a decent producer such as Dicks and pair him with a script editor who **doesn't** see **WHO** as a space version of Captain Marvel Meets Dennis the Menace, and give them a free hand and a fair time-slot with the potential for winning high ratings. Otherwise the next couple of seasons could well prove to be the end and if so might actually be for the better.

SHORT-SIGHTED

Nigel Smerdon, Devon (16-11-88)
So the movie Doctor is to be Dudley Moore. It's a choice which makes me wonder if the producers of the film see **DOCTOR WHO** in the same light as I do. I imagine most people, if asked, would regard Moore as primarily a comedian or comic actor and, personally, I'm so familiar with his performance in this kind of rôle that I'm going to find it very difficult to take him seriously as the Doctor. I would have preferred a lesser-known actor with a more imposing and serious screen presence. The producers have indicated they want to remain true to the spirit of the TV series but this piece of casting suggests that the Doctor is perceived more in comic terms than in any other way, and whatever Moore does with the rôle he'll always be too short. This comment may seem flippant but the Doctor should command a degree of respect and authority and a taller actor would be ahead of the game.

'WHO IS TOP IN DEATH-SLOT

Jason Bartholomew, Herts (17-11-88)
The 7.35pm slot on Monday and Wednesday on BBC1 is a very difficult one because of the opposition and the following average figures for other shows shown in the same slot since September 1987 show that **DOCTOR WHO** would be at the top of this chart if it were not for the fact that Watchdog is given **two** showings per episode:

Watchdog(two showings)	5.6m
DOCTOR WHO (Season 24 average)	4.9m
The Clothes Show(two showings)	4.8m
King and Co.	4.7m
Adventure	4.6m
Trackside Story	4.2m
Cudmores Call	3.6m
Best of British	3.4m

As for the **Trial** fiasco of Season 23, figures for Saturday have decreased dramatically since the '70s. A case in point is The Flying Doctors which had a respectable 9 million viewers in its Friday 8.10pm slot but since moved to Saturday at 5.15pm it is down to 5.1m. Taking this into account it seems likely that **WHO** would drop back to an average of 4 million if it went back to its 'traditional' slot.

SOPHIE: THE BEST THING SINCE SYLV!

Sean Gibbons, Northern Ireland (2-11-88)
Thanks to Jane Evans for her interesting analysis of why **DOCTOR WHO** no longer appeals to female viewers. I am a male and I was far more **embarrassed** than titillated to see Tegan, Nyssa and then Peri 'dressed' in such ridiculous outfits. Embarrassed because the Doctor's companions were no longer real and interesting characters in their own right - as Barbara and Sarah - but cartoon characters. What was particularly sad was that the actresses playing them were clearly genuinely beautiful, intelligent and thus attractive women in their own right and their costumes and characterisations therefore belittled both them **and** the male viewers. However I'm glad to see Ace is already much more than a cipher, even if a little too far in the opposite direction, and Sophie Aldred is the best thing to hit **DOCTOR WHO** since Sylvester McCoy!

Changing the subject, there are no letters in CT this year and The Frame only appears quarterly, theretore **DWB** has been the **only** main forum in 1988 where individual fans had a chance to air their **honest** views, good **and** bad. The 'delay effect' in other **WHO** publications means that when fans disagree, their differences are usually resolved or altered by the time a two/three month old letter sees print. Thankfully **DWB** helps to keep fan feedback much more up-to-date than that via its letters pages. So JNT/Sylvester, we "barkers" appear here in **DWB** because it's the **only** regular and up-to-date forum fans have for **our** voices to be heard!

GROVELLING PUBLICATIONS

Michael Seely, Norfolk (28-10-88)
I am fed up with nausiating pieces of writing such as the **DOCTOR WHO** preview in Starburst#116. I quote: "JNT(who apparently)has steered(the programme) successfully for the past eight years"! Ha! Who is this writer (hypocrite ?) trying to convince ?! The Frame appears to crawl quite happily and Private Who is not much better. All of a sudden everyone wants to be a JNT supporter! Well, I am **not.** I'll buy these publications only for features on the past. For news, **DWB** will be the **trusted** source. If **DWB** is the left-wing faction of **DOCTOR WHO** Fandom then I'm glad to be a socialist!

A4...

Andrew Cassills, Renfrewshire (27-11-88)
I'm glad you've decided to start posting **DWB** in A4 envelopes. **DWB** remains the best news-zine, not only in presentation and design but especially in content; far superior to the outdated news which constitutes CT. CT seems so glossily amateur under its current editor, although this may be partly due to overall problems within DWAS itself.

...OR NOT A4 ?

Grant Cribb, Derbyshire (24-12-88)
I hope you reconsider the A4 envelope scheme. I suspect it has more to do with the effort involved in folding a couple of thousand **DWB**s in half than it does with creasing them. I, for one, would rather have a single neat crease across the middle than have the whole thing mangled

"SYLVESTER PERSUADED JNT TO STAY"

R. Rizzo, New York, USA (3-12-88)
Sylvester McCoy was on New Jersey Network Live on 19th November and said he talked JNT into coming back for another year. All the **DOCTOR WHO** fans present cheered when he gave them the news. I didn't.

FAN FICTION: THE DEBATE CONTINUES

Julian White, London E12 (31-10-88)
Allan Toombs' letter in **DWB#59** concerning your comment about fan fiction in **DWB#56** led me to delve into my stack of back numbers to see what I'd missed. I eventually found the comment (after several hours of distraction - the usual problem with **DWB**; too much to read!) and I feel that you are being a little unfair. I'd certainly subscribe to the view that **DWB** does not need an additional input in this area but I'm equally convinced that you are wrong in saying that fan fiction "appeals to too small a minority of fans". This is indeed a dismissive and unworthy comment. There are a large number of regular and semi-regular fanzines that publish only fiction - surely there must be **some** demand! Having said that I must also add that a lot of fan fiction is barely worth the paper it's printed on but even established authors had to start somewhere (ever read any Jane Austen juvenilia ?).

D W B REVIVES THE PARTS...

Diane Brendan, Chicago, USA (14-11-88)
I recently picked up your magazine after a hiatus of my own for about two years, during which my interest in **DOCTOR WHO.** However, I am glad to say my interest in the series has been rekindled and I do credit **DWB** for playing a large part. Please keep up the good work!!

I agree with Mr.Toombs on your dismissal of fan fiction. However, I will agree that there's an awful lot of really **bad** fan fiction out there and I do wish some of these writers would actually read over their stories a few times before putting them to print!

*ED: To test the waters we will be including a question regarding the possibility of featuring fan fiction in DWB in the 1988 Readers poll (see next issue). If we are proved wrong in our belief that fan fiction is a minority interest then **top quality** fan fiction may well become a regular feature...*

PANOPTICON IX: THE LAST WORD

Alan Disdale, Essex (25-10-88)
Being one of the many fans who avoided attending PanoptiCon IV I can only comment second hand from what I've heard from other attendees. Firstly the reasons I did not attend are two-fold, one the cost. Having been to several past events I have experienced how unimaginative the organisers of DWAS events are and indeed PanoptiCon IX turned out to be a mish-mash of disorganised events which seemed to have been thrown together at the last minute. It was never likely to live up to the cost of £30±. Secondly the location. Yet again they had to use the prison-like surroundings of the University. Memories of the depressingly cold surroundings and acommodation endured during previous years still remain. It would take something very special (Lis Sladen attending) to make me return to such an event.

Thankfully PanoptiCon and other DWAS conventions no longer hold the monopoly on being able to get good guests. Many smaller and very much better organised events now attract more guests and tend to be much more friendlier. I am thinking of events like Leisure Hive and FalCon which have far outstriped any recent DWAS event for enjoyment.

As for the stewards at DWAS events, if past years are anything to go by the majority are just like a load of kids that are on one big ego trip, who like to play with walkie-talkies and do little else. They rarely know or care what is going on and if you ask a question - as I have done - they look at you as though you have just crawled out of the woodwork. The only thing I did miss was David Howe saying **"No photographs!"**

The larger the convention the larger the problems and you have to rely on **everyone** doing their bit. Your stewards and helpers can make or break an event. You need above all their commitment to make the event a success. I would say to the organisers of PanoptiCons, find another location to hold it and find some new stewards - perhaps within local groups - that would be much more commited in making the event a success.

WAS SUSPENSION REALLY JUSTIFIED ?

S.Flinn, Cambridge (11-11-88)
The recent Saward and ratings features have been fascinating, although I disagree with the former script editor over the casting of Colin Baker who I thought never got the chance to prove himself on a consistent basis. The promise was there but the scripts rarely fulfilled that promise, while Grade's actions effectively diminished any impact he made in the short time he was given. Was Season 22's average rating of 7.2 million really low enough to justify the suspension, since this figure is higher than those for the previous two seasons as well as that for Pertwee's first year which **saved DOCTOR WHO** from the axe in 1970!

ENTERPRISES PACKAGING BLUNDERS

Andrew Trowbridge, Dorset (2-12-88)
I'm pleased to see BBC Enterprises release some more merchandise at long last. The redesigned **Terror of the Zygons** video cover is especially eyecatching, despite the write-up on the back (ie: 'Lock Ness' quickly followed by 'Loch Ness', and what about the bit that says Part-cyborg, part-organic ; isn't a cyborg, by definition, part-organic anyway...?).

The **Genesis/Slipback** cover looks good at first glance but begs the questions:
a) Why is the Dalek back-to-front (yet again) and apparently firing a beam from its deadly **sucker stick** ?!
and b) Why does Davros appear to be doing an impression of Popeye, complete with pipe ? That's what it looks like to me, anyway!

WHITE PAPER - NEW AGE ?

Brian Gallagher, London W12 (23-11-88)
Reports in the press concerning the government's plans for broadcasting seem to indicate the BBC will eventually be financed by a 'pay as you view' and sponsorship system. A report in Today even concluded that "Children's favourite **DOCTOR WHO** could be sponsored by toy companies", but it is the 'pay as you view' scheme which I think will have most impact on the series. The more people view a programme, the more money the BBC will get. Therefore ratings will become even more important so it is likely the series will be moved from its present ratings-constricting slot and the standards will have to be raised to obtain decent figures.

"JN-T DESERVES OUR SYMPATHIES"

Bill Edmunds, New York, USA (11-11-88)
Poor JNT! First he's producer, then he's not, then he's not, then no one's sure what's going on! And on top of this he's mugged. Like him or not he deserves our sympathies. And if **Remembrance is** a classic, for God's sake **tell** him so that if he **does** produce Season 26 he will at least have some incentive to make some decent stories. The more we insult him, the more crap we will get on our screens.

HIGH QUALITY MARVEL SPECIAL

Alan Beadnell, Gloucestershire (21-11-88)
Within the space of three days I have been able to buy **DWB#60**, the Marvel 25th Anniversary Special and DWM#143 - and all have been of such high quality that I couldn't put any of them down for the rest of the day! **DWB** continues to serve hard-core fans extensively chronicalling the series in a professional way and Marvel seem to have found their own talent in John Freeman whose issues have expressed a caring, informed enthusiasm that previous editors could not.

The new logo continues to be impressive, especially with 'uncomplicated' covers such as 56/58/60, but are we **really** to be subjected to the tedium of a ratings compilation ? I for one know that more people watched **City of Death** than **The Mysterious Planet** ! By the way, can you imagine the impact Sylvester would make with the scripts of Season 14 ?!

Finally, could I invite anyone in the Cheltenham area interested in forming a **DOCTOR WHO** social group to contact me on 0242-37499 (evenings only).

"CHANGES IN STYLE ENSURES SURVIVAL"

Henry Potts, London NW5 (3-10-88)
Having existed for 25 years, **DOCTOR WHO** has had many changes in style and, perhaps, that is why it has lasted so long. If you took somebody who had never seen or heard of **DOCTOR WHO** before and showed them **The Romans, The Deadly Assassin** and **Delta and the Bannermen,** if it wasn't for the TARDIS and the lead character being called The Doctor, he'd probably think they were from different series - in fact it's easier to believe that **The Deadly Assassin** and Shadow (from Blakes 7's second season) are from the same series than **The Deadly Assassin** and **The Romans!** - and thus it is quite possible, and of course a common occurence, to be a fan of some **DOCTOR WHO** and loathe other parts. I have taken extremes in my above example, but if fandoms of more 'uniform' programmes (eg: Blakes 7) can have (slight) schisms, is it surprising that **DOCTOR WHO** fans are so divided ?

Which brings me to **DWB#57**'s reprint of Jeremy Bentham's 1977 article for DWAS on Season 14 - quote: "What each member must do now is make a choice between progression and nostalgia." I'd restate that as: Each member must either just remember a good programme that has reached the end of its viable life-time or support what is, stylistically, nearly a new series. Change is essential, if you like the new style, good; if you don't, realise that if **DOCTOR WHO** had stayed in the old style it would have, probably, soon died, and just hope you like the next style.

All the above paragraph applies now, and when Graham Williams began, and Barry Letts, and Patrick Troughton... The only valid complaint you can make about John Nathan-Turner is that his style has been around **too** long.

By the way, if **DWB** had existed in 1977, are you certain we wouldn't be seeing headlines like **Robert Holmes must go NOW!** or **Support our Campaign to Remove Philip Hinchcliffe!** ? You often say **DOCTOR WHO** needs new blood and that it's just JN-T's plaything - well, try replacing **DOCTOR WHO** by **DWB** and JNT by Gary Levy... I'm not saying I don't like **DWB**, but the above is an interesting thought, which also raises the question: Can **DWB** exist without Gary Levy ? And vice versa ?

VALUE FOR MONEY

Steve Rogers, Suffolk (1-12-88)
DWB#60 was excellent, particularly the review of **Remembrance of the Daleks** by Justin Richards, who summed up the story very well indeed (and it certainly deserved its 85% (A Grade) rating, and the interview with John Scott Martin which was very interesting and entertaining.

The new £24 subscription rate - for 12 issues including 3 specials - has got to be excellent value for money. If only DWAS could offer the same.

IT TAKES ALL-SORTS TO MAKE A HAPPY WORLD

Nothing in the world could have prepared me for the sight of the Kandyman. Oh yes, I'd heard reports, mutterings of discontent from fans who had seen glimpses of the costume, but somehow, my imagination could not rise to the challenge. But then, on the 2nd of November, there it was – squeaky voice and all : a sight to challenge the mighty Nimon as the series' all-time clanger.

Perhaps it is best to backtrack a bit, and start from the beginning of the story. It seemed obvious that it would take a lot to rival the excellent REMEMBRANCE OF THE DALEKS, and all reports I'd read indicated that THE HAPPINESS PATROL was the drongo of the season. The opening shot seemed to blie this, with an unusual angle on a dark and gloomy set – yes, it was different from the Dalek story, but it was trying specifically to be just that. Sadly, the story that followed was something of a 'curates egg'.

There were many things that I enjoyed, the highlight was Dominic Glynn's excellent music, which set the mood marvelously. To my mind, it is the best incidental score the series has boasted since the music has been back in the hands of independant composers. The theme accompanying the death of Fifi was very moving, and throughout the story many scenes were given so much more menace by Dominic's work.

Sylvester McCoy and Sophie Aldred's performances were as good as ever, and with every episode that passes it seems easier to relate to their characters, creating a stronger sense of continuity. Certainly it is good to see the Doctor's character stabilize after the experimental work of last season. There were still a few moments when Sylvester over enunciated his lines, such as "You're plaaying aa daangerous gaaaame, Kandymaaan, that ... red ... hot ... poker will cut–through–you–like–a–knife–through–butter(scotch) !", but on the whole, these moments are getting less and less frequent. In fact, most of the performances in this story were good. Sheila Hancock was wonderful – as far OTT as the story required, but always keeping away from silliness. Sadly, Georgina Hale was the weak link in the cast, particularly in the first episode. Given the marvelous line "Have a nice Death", she ruined it to the point that I only understood what she'd said when I played back my video. Later on, when she arrested the Doctor, and declared "Heeee iss OBVIiously a SPYYYYY", my patience ran out. Later on, her performance was toned down a bit, and I was left wondering if she'd been instructed specifically to over–stress those lines.

All the sets were marvelous – very wierd and menacing. I loved them all, and thought that they enhanced the production no end. Two points struck me, though. The first was that Ace's line "It's too happy" was completely inappropriate – I can imagine what the script called for, and John Asbridge's sets were definately not that; so having decided (very wisely) to adopt a darker, moodier setting, surely the dialogue could have been ammended accordingly ? The second and rather more serious point, given the brevity of Ace's comment, is that there were so few shots or camera angles that made the most of the sets. With the exception of the montage of wide shots of the Kandy Kitchen (personally, I would have found a slow tracking shot more effective) and a few scattered wide–ish shots, most of the story seemed to be recorded entirely in medium close–up.

This, in fact brings me neatly onto the subject of the direction. Once again, Chris Clough seems to have made the least of the opportunities available to him. Great sets, marvelous costumes (with two exceptions, but the Doctor's costume was unalterable, and the other ... well, I'll deal with 'him' later), excellent masks for the pipe–creatures, Fifi : surely one of the most effective and complex animatronic creations ever made for Doctor Who, splendid cast – and the whole dratted lot recorded in the most bland and insipid manner possible.

Where were the BIG close–ups of people. Where were the long shots, showing off the sets to their best advantage ? Can anyone remember a real close–up of one of the pipe–creatures? Of Helen A ? Of Susan Q ? All three episodes seemed to consist almost entirely of head–and–shoulders shots. There were occasional nice shots, such as the point of view of the security men from the balcony (by the way, didn't the Doctor climb those stairs QUICKLY ?) but on the whole there wasn't much. There were also horribly distracting moments, such as cutting from a medium close–up of Ace to a two–shot of her and Susan Q during the "I'm not Happiness Patrol material" speech. If the camera is the eye of the audience, then it seemed that we had all suddenly lost interest and had wandered away !

Another ridiculous sequence is when Helen A suggests that her husband might find her televised speech instructive. Since this consists solely of the words "... now remember, enjoy yourselves. Happiness will prevail" it seems unlikely to contain anything he has not heard before. I realize that we would have been bored to death if we'd been shown the entire broadcast, but if the camera had closed in on Joseph C's increasingly bored face with Helen A's voice recounting statistics from the TV, and then mixed slowly into the final lines, the impression of him watching the whole speech might have come across better.

Particularly irritating was the use of the concept that 'if it isn't in shot, it doesn't exist'. An example of this is in the Waiting Zone, when the Doctor, Ace and Harold V talk in perfectly normal tones about escaping, and Priscilla P is standing not three foot away, entirely oblivious to this, since she is out of shot at the time. Yuk!

Most annoying of all was the dreadful sequence when Earl Sigma is playing melancholy music which echoes down the corridors. The Happiness Patrol drive up to him, and when they are just a few feet away, he notices them for the first time (he is obviously deaf) and changes to a happy tune. Luckily for him, the entire Happiness Patrol is also deaf, since they have not registered the killjoy music, and are quite content to give him a smiley badge and move on ! Surely a better interpretation of the scene would be to start in close up on Earl playing happy music, which would make the audience think "Hey, that's a switch", and pull back to reveal the Happiness Patrol go–cart driving past, which would make the viewer think "Oh, THAT'S why!". That's no more expensive or time consuming to record than what we got, is it ?

Two shots that did impress me were the model shots of the space shuttle abandoning Terra Alpha. It was something I hadn't expected, and worked well, since it was a break from the claustrophobic feeling of the sets. It might have been nice (although probably too expensive) to have seen an establishing model shot of the colony on Terra Alpha. Ah well ...

The story was actually quite interesting. As bizzare as anything seen in season 24, it displayed Andrew Cartmel's apparent determination to keep Doctor Who fresh and original. There are not many people who could call this a tired re–working of an overused idea, at least not with a straight face ! The political parallels were kept mercifully subtle, and Sheila Hancock's take–off of Margret Thatcher was a joy. I don't always think that layering of a story in this way works very well, but this case is an exception, and I enjoyed it.

Although episodes 2 and 3 worked quite well, with events proceding at a decent pace, it in with part one that I really felt the wheels turning. To be frank, not much actually happened, did it ? Most of the episode is all explanation, talk and setup. "Have you heard about the Kandyman ? No ? I'll tell you about him ..." "Have you heard about Helen A ?" "Have you heard about the massacre ?". Yeah, yeah yeah ... (yawn).

There seemed to be several unexplained moments in the story. Firstly, there was the much talked about ("no it's only a rumour") scene when the Happiness Patrol started to paint the TARDIS pink. That's fine, as far as it goes, I suppose. Just one thing : what WERE they doing, wandering around the place carrying large tins of pink paint ? Was it simply a standard precaution against every wandering maniac who might happen to materialize a large blue box in the corridors ? There was no lead up, showing them discovering the TARDIS and deciding what to do with it, so their actions verged on the gratuitous. Also, I was not impressed by the panning of the camera up and down, entirely out of sync. with the paint–brush.

I was also puzzled by Ace's line "couldn't you afford a real gun ?", since by now she must surely be aware that guns come in all shapes and sizes – she's seen enough of them ! The comment seemed particularly incongruous, because the director had chosen (surprise, surprise) to avoid showing even one close–up of the gun. Since the rest of the scene consisted of Daisy K being spectacularly unsuspicious of the Doctor and Ace's fervent desire to be arrested, I was begining to wonder if there was something better on the other channel.

Sadly, while most of the story was reasonable (despite the oddities mentioned above), the dialogue often let the procedings down dreadfully. There are too many examples to list them all, but my pet hates are "That's ni–ice, it makes me feel, sort of ...""Melancholy?""Yes, a pleasant melancholy" (a scene not helped by John Normington's delivery of the lines), and Earl Sigma's "NOT THE KANDY KITCHEN !". Surely that, at least, could have been changed to a simple "Are you sure that's wise, Doc ?" or something of that nature. Sadly it takes only one bad line to ruin a scene consisting of many good lines. However there were many excellent scenes, particularly the 'balcony scene' and the Doctor/Helen A confrontations, and when the dialogue was good, it was excellent, so perhaps the balance is more or less even.

And finally, on to the Kandyman himself. "I'm begining to feel one of my moods coming on" said the ROBOT in episode one. I see. Actually, by episode two, having recovered from the shock of the costume and the silly voice (couldn't it have been a bit deeper ?) I began to relax and see it as just another strange element of the story. However, the concept of making sweets that are so good that people die of pleasure is such a stupid one that it deserves no more comment. The name Kandyman was happy enough, so wouldn't it have been better to contrast that, and have a hooded old man crouched, wizard–like over his cauldrons, poisoning the food of all those who are to 'dissappear' ? Luckily the Kandyman appears less frequently than he might have done, and indeed, I was surprised at just how irrelevant he was to the whole story. The death of the Kandyman stuck me as odd; one moment he was wandering along the tunnels, and the next, something totaly unlike the Kandyman hurtles from the pipe. Was he supposed to have melted from the heat of the oven, or was it something that happened inside the pipes as a result of the pipe–people pulling all the levers ? Answers on a postcard please.

THE HAPPINESS PATROL has another thing going for it, which is that everyone seems to be talking about Doctor Who again – "did you see it ?","What did you think ?" etc. The series has once again achieved a high profile and is fresh in the public eye again. This can only be a good thing. Most casual viewers I've spoken to appear to have liked what they've seen of this season, and the strongest critisism of this story from the non–fans is that the Kandyman is "a bit silly" – certainly a different reaction to that of many ardent fans, whose loathing knows no bounds ! The fact of the matter is that most viewers watch Doctor Who as a bit of fun, and that's precisely what THE HAPPINESS PATROL is.

In conclusion, (and from a fan point of view) it is fair to say that THE HAPPINESS PATROL will never be looked upon as a classic, but not all stories can achieve that status. There must always be the average stories, and this one is by no means a disaster. I would much rather watch it to any of season 24, and there are many stories within seasons 15–17 which simply don't approach the standards set in this season.

As an example of Doctor Who at it's riveting best, this story falls short, but as an entertaining TV programme that kept me watching on three consecutive Wednesday evenings, it succeded. And that, surely, is what it's all about ?

Jonathan Way.

GARY PHILLIPS: Despite the fact the final episode can be summed up in one word - crap - this story, with its psuedo-**Paradise Towers** sets, like so many of the JN-T era failed to live up to its promise, but for once this was a blessing as **The Happiness Patrol** was not the farcical fiasco which we had all been expecting, but instead evolved into a highly original, well acted and far from cheap-looking story which came as a breath of fresh air after the superb but rather too traditional **Remembrance of the Daleks.** Sylvester and Sophie just keep on getting better and better, long may they reign. I for one certainly believe that Graeme Curry deserves a further bite of the cherry - how about appointing him script editor, Mr Shivas ?

S.FIELD: Graeme Curry's vision was brilliant but frankly he did not have the skill required to bring about a successful execution and it seems Andrew Cartmel was equally unable to help. What could have been riveting too often collapsed in on itself as silliness. However, in spite of this what was being attempted could still be perceived, and at its heart this story made serious points about the nature of happiness and why authoritarian power is wrong even when directed towards apparently 'benevolent' goals. For all its flaws it stimulated me - and surely this is a very good thing for any television programme to achieve. Having now had an 'oddball' story with a good script and (largely) poor realisation and one with a weak script but strong production, would it be too much to hope that both parts come together in **Greatest Show in the Galaxy**...?

MARTIN JACKSON: Looking back on the story, I don't think it was all that bad. **Remembrance** was a hard act to follow and it tended to suffer from Season 24-type silliness at times, but there was a good story, some well-defined characters - particularly Helen A - and a moral statement, ie: 'if you want people to be happy, give them something to be happy about'. I couldn't help noticing the similarity with **Paradise Towers** - dark corridors, a seemingly happy society with sinister undertones and lots of women with funny coloured hair! **Paradise Towers** was ruined by poor direction and casting but **The Happiness Patrol** got it about right.

ANDY WALKER: For some reason **The Happiness Patrol** had some weird kind of attraction about it, even when I heard it earlier in the year as a proposed story title for the season - seemingly on the surface simplistic but with perhaps some hidden undertones of menace. I must admit, grudgingly, that I did actually enjoy it on the whole, although obviously it could never have happened under any previous script editor and I'm definitely no big fan of Mr.Cartmel after his treatment of Season 24. For me it worked far better than **Paradise Towers** and **Dragonfire** - the Kandyman was just an outrageous and potentially stupid creation and therein held the attention for me.

W.DE SILVA: **The Happiness Patrol** was, to my mind, nearly as good as **Remembrance.** The story was a well-structured, suspenseful piece of drama which sustained my interest most of the time. **Remembrance** achieved this by a high level of inventiveness but the effect in **The Happiness Patrol** was altogether subtler, with the plot gradually getting more and more involved as new threads began to appear. The story seemed to have a slight edge of claustrophobia to it and would have looked quite unnerving filmed in black and white in the 1960s. There were some faults of course: The Kandy Kitchen should have been much darker, illuminated in multicoloured hues perhaps, and the set pieces were not always perfect and had a cartoonish feel to them. But the plain fact is that the last few weeks of watching **DOCTOR WHO** have been the most enjoyable for some years - since **Caves of Androzani** in fact. Most of the credit should go to Sophie Aldred and Sylvester McCoy who have been taking the scripts easily through the dodgy bits.

SHAMS UDDIN: It was so clever how the undercurrent point being made in this story was so beautifully disguised by the air of incredulity and silliness of the situation. A simple substitution of the word 'wealthy' for the word 'happy' outlines a marvellous parallel with the state of Britain as it is today with this simple but typically **DOCTOR WHO** plot. However, had this point at all emphasised and not been smothered by a ridiculous Kandy monster, a pink police box, outlandish hairdos and fun guns, this story would be surrounded in considerable controversy. It is clear that if this story had been presented any more seriously than it was, it would have made it unamenable for the writer to get away with suggesting this theme in such an outrightly nonchalant manner. The acting alone (especially that of Sylvester McCoy's, who has now restored great wisdom and caring to the Time Lord) has elevated this story far higher than the "Season 24 mode".

TIM WESTMACOTT: I'm not sure about **The Happiness Patrol.** I can see what they were trying to achieve but it needed more time and money to bring it off properly. The various elements of the story were insufficiently developed to turn it into the cult classic that it could have been, though I quite liked the Kandy Man - I wonder if Bassetts will sue!

MARTIN STEWART: After episode one I was in complete despair; I had still not quite got over how good **Remembrance of the Daleks** had been, and to be presented with this nonsense was devastating. With the episode ending with the Doctor being confronted by a giant liquorice allsort, I concluded that producing **DOCTOR WHO** for so long must have finally snapped JN-T's sanity. However since seeing episodes two and three, I have reconsidered somewhat. The standards still do not come up to those of **Remembrance,** but in the end the script was really very clever (and, I think, a none-too-subtle dig at Mrs.Thatcher), the concepts were genuinely disturbing and the whole thing was actually believably resolved (unlike **Paradise Towers**). The production did have an 'on the cheap' look but still managed to summon up a nightmarish and surreal atmosphere.

JONATHAN HAYWARD: How could they do it ? After such an exciting and fresh story like **Remembrance,** how could they follow it with **The Happiness Patrol**; pure unmitigated dross - you were certainly right about it being a throwback (throw-up ?) to last year.

FREDDIE WRIGHT: As predicted in the Summer Special, **The Happiness Patrol** is a dire travesty. Although the director seemed to be able to make more of the sinister undertones (the major failing of **Paradise Towers**), I still feel that this type of story has no place in **DOCTOR WHO.** Unfortunately it will lose any respect the show had regained after the Dalek story.

IAN SKELTON: Wasn't it sad to see the series sink back to Season 24 levels so quickly ? It seems that JN-T **can** produce watchable **DOCTOR WHO** every so often but is unable to maintain any sort of quality for very long.

DANIEL BLYTHE: **The Happiness Patrol** was awful, but not as bad as I had feared. The one real embarrassment was the Kandy Man; I quite liked the idea of a 'glucose-based life form' but he didn't **have** to look like Bertie Bassett! The script was a fairly neat satire on the holiday camp ethos of "Have fun or else...", although Chris Clough's overall inconsistency as a director spoilt it, some scenes being very well handled and well lit (like the opening one and the scene with the snipers on the roof) and others, for example the Kandy Kitchen scenes, being horrifically cringe-inducing to watch. I did, however, like the brief bursts of charm and authority from Sylvester McCoy and he is undeniably the first Doctor since Tom Baker in whom I can really believe (witness him turning the bureaucratic tables on Trevor Sigma, for instance). He is no longer the casual observer of last season but a Doctor who can dominate a situation given the right opportunity.

JONATHAN BURT: **The Happiness Patrol** has seen the culmination of the worst aspects of JN-T's production over the last three years: stupid and unnecessary gimmicks (Fifi and the Kandy Man); juvenility; bad acting; sloppy direction (as usual with Chris Clough); and a silly script. All these things obscured a potentially disturbing and inventive storyline and rendered it instead to farce

DAVE ALLEN: Last year I wrote to voice my disgust about **Paradise Towers,** but at least that made me laugh at its awfulness. This latest 'story' is so childish, shoddy-looking and downright embarrassing that, ultimately, it comes over as just plain boring. The script makes Rod Hull & Emu look like The South Bank Show. To all those who say "Be open minded", "Change is inevitable", "Examine the underlying political allegories", etc., this is all very well. However, this story is just too uninteresting and silly and makes pointless any attempt to give it credit.

JEREMY SPENCER: After watching the show for 18 years I can honestly say it has reached the depths of despair with **The Happiness Patrol.** This story beats **The Horns of Nimon** and the dire **Paradise Towers** hands down. How the same producer could produce the excellent **Remembrance of the Daleks** I don't know.

STEPHEN POWELL: I for one was certainly not of a happy frame of mind, especially considering the marvellous beginning to the season. We were warned that this would be the dodo of the season and how right you were. Such a glaring contrast to the tight-paced, exciting Dalek story (did the robot **really** have to be modelled on Bertie Bassett - are there any explanations for its appearance because I can't think of one ?). Of course it was a great morality tale as the conclusion of the 'story' demonstrated, but it can hardly have invoked much excitement on the viewer's part. The only plus was the commitment of the actors who had to put up with the whole thing. Sylvester was again excellent and is now truly the Doctor, and Sophie will be an excellent companion if the character is developed. This story might have fitted in nicely with the generally 'Cartmelian' feel of the previous season, but sandwiched between Daleks and Cybermen I think not. Here we appear to be presented with a strange hotch-potch of what JNT may **deem** a celebration of the old and new, but what I think illustrates the difference clearly between the good and the bad.

ALAN GREEN: It was much like **Paradise Towers,** a strong story with underlying political themes which had the **potential** to be a very hard-hitting drama. Unfortunately what we saw on the screen destroyed most of that potential. Humour played too much. The Kandy Man **should** have been one of the most frightening robots ever seen on **DOCTOR WHO** and the viewers should have been afraid of Helen A and the patrols. But how could we ? There is nothing wrong with the ideas being thought up, but their translation to the visual product is all wrong. At what stage things go wrong I don't know, but there is obviously something wrong somewhere.

SID SMITH: How can JNT and company have the brass nerve to draw their salaries for this shoddy and amateurish piece of garbage ? I can only conclude that the production team were taking the mickey and having a laugh at the expense of the fans and the general public when they put this one in the can (it was supposedly JNT's last story afterall). It is simply beyond me how this mess got past the waste paper bins of the production office. Do they seriously expect us to believe **The Happiness Patrol** was the best script available to them for inclusion in the **anniversary** season? If it was then I suggest they do us all a favour and call it a day.

PAUL BUTLER: Your Armchair Guide (DWB#57) didn't prepare me for anything as dreadful as **this!** How such a poor script managed to get through initial vetting is beyond me. Cheap; shoddy; badly acted; badly directed (I doubt whether Chris Clough will be Marvel's 'best director' again this year) - tackiness from every angle. Any good done by Messrs.Morgan and Aaronovitch will have been well and truly wasted by this crap.

ANDREW CURRINGTON: This story begs a parallel with **Paradise Towers** (and not just because the sets are virtually identical) - it must have looked so juicy on paper, and even in the Cartmelised TV version I could pick out woefully underplayed parodies of our own beloved governmental system brought out on the theme of anarchists versus a state so hung up on its own ethics that it failed to take account of the greater good of the people. Anyway, all this that we know makes good **WHO** was submerged beneath what JNT **thinks** is good **WHO** and so another rich script went to waste.

DARREN MASTERS: What a shame that the best and worst stories for many years had to be shown back to back. It is the excellent McCoy who provides us with the only good scene where he confronts the guards. This scene sparkles with the magic of **WHO;** that indefinable quality that makes even the worst stories bearable

STUART STREET: I now realise what **The Happiness Patrol** really means. It is in fact a parody on the state of the series. For instance, Helen A is a thinly-veiled attack on JNT, Harold V represents Eric Saward and his death represents the way he was dumped by the production office. The Happiness Patrol is BBC Enterprises and the Kandy Man, with its bright and clashing colours, represents Colin Baker. Each time I watch it I see more and more devious puns. I wonder how Graeme Curry managed to get it from a story to a finished product. Was it that it is too subtle for JNT to understand ? I have to admit that parts of the story were very good but were lost in an ocean of dross.

*STAR*RATINGS*

SCRIPT	***
ORIGINALITY	****
DIRECTION	*½
ACTING	**½
SETS	*
COSTUMES	½
MONSTERS	½
SPECIAL EFFECTS	*
MUSIC	***½
OVERALL STORY	*

TOTAL = 37%

PEARSONALLY SPEAKING

TALKING to Alister Pearson - former DWM poster artist and present Target cover artist - is like having a conversation with at least four different people all at once. Described by colleagues as "temperamental", one minute he can be stoney-faced and serious, speaking in a low, depressed voice, the next he can be charming and witty with a mischievous twinkle in his eye and behaving in a slightly camp manner and the next thing you know he's making some dreadfully blunt or unsubtle comment in a tone of voice laden with ambiguity. You can never be sure of his mood, what he's thinking or if he really means anything he's saying. He talks disparagingly about his own artistic ability, a skill that many would surely envy. He obviously covets praise and attention, yet seems to reject them when they're offered. I got the impression that he actually resents his own success.

Most of all, he's got a thing about shopping trolleys...

- JAMES HOWARTH

JH: How did you originally get involved in the world of WHO art?

AJP: I bought a pencil.

Seriously...

Seriously, I bought a pencil...and having read former Target editor Christine Donougher's invitation in DWM(#83-JH) for fans to send in their artwork for a so-called 'Mystery Project' I got scribbling.

The 'Mystery Project' turned out to be Peter Haining's The Key to Time...

That's right. I had two drawings published in that, both of which I now find highly embarrassing.

Why ?

Oh God, they're **awful!** Really crude, dreadful affairs. You know, shading an area and then rubbing it with a finger, unforgiveable, especially if it's not your own finger! My technique, if you can call it that, is much stronger now. In those days I couldn't **paint** a portrait to save my life. Bloody hopeless!

You've come on a bit since then.

So I'm told.

So what was the next step ?

Well, of course I'd always been good at art at school - Grade 'A' A-Level and all that sort of thing - and I'd been a fan of the programme since the year dot, therefore my ideal dream was to combine the two and be a book cover artist. Only **DOCTOR WHO** books, mind you, nothing else which, looking back, was obviously a mistake. A big one.

But you achieved your goal.

Eventually, yes. But at what cost ?

What do you mean ?

Well, I had this crazy idea fixed firmly in my mind and everything else just went to the wall. For example, I left art college after only one term. Nowadays, thank goodness, it's more of a special interest rather than the semi-obsession that it was. The programme, and the things that stem from it, play a key role in my day-to-day life simply because of the work I'm doing, but now it doesn't over-ride other considerations and commitments. It was rather strange, actually. It wasn't until I'd achieved my 'goal' as you put it, and had begun doing the covers - realising as one does that dreams when you fulfil them are not as wonderful as you think they'll be - that I was able to put things in perspective. I suppose it was a case of: "Okay, Al Pearson is now a **DOCTOR WHO** book cover artist so, aside from all that, **who** is this Al Pearson guy ?" I was able to step back, if you see what I mean, and take a long, hard look at myself.

And what did you see ?

Oh God, don't ask!

That bad ?

In some respects.

So how long did it take to fulfil your dream, be it wonderful or not ?

About three years all told. I kept on pestering Nigel Robinson and Mike Brett the art director; ringing them up, sending them letters, setting myself projects like: "Okay Al, let's paint a new cover for...um...**Image of the Fendahl**", and sending off the results. All to no avail.

They weren't impressed ?

No, and in most cases, with good reason. Looking back at my new cover for **Four to Doomsday** I just shudder! Absolute rubbish! They'd write back with the usual thing, you know: "Thanks, but no thanks", advising that I invest in an airbrush and kept hammering away.

Did you ?

Oh yes. Well, hammering away, certainly. But I didn't get an airbrush. I've never used one. That isn't strictly true; I've never used one with precision or any degree of success! I don't like them, anyway.

Why not ?

Ah well...first, let me make it quite clear that I'm not knocking Andrew Skilleter, or anybody else who uses an airbrush for that matter, but Andrew's work in particular is very polished and very...'smooth' I suppose you could say - which is fine. Very professional. But for my own personal, and I must stress **personal,** taste, it's **too** polished, **too** smooth. About the only thing I like about my own work is the fact that it has a sort of 'grittiness' to it. When I do a portrait it's a case of 'warts and all'! No wonder Sylvester frowned when he saw the cover of **Delta and the Bannermen!** Another little thing I've noticed concerns Colin Baker. Colin has a couple of tiny blemishes on his cheek, one on his chin and one on his forehead. I know they're there, you know they're there, I'm sure Colin knows they're there, so I always paint them in. Now, Andrew doesn't and I think that is perhaps one of the main differences between us: I don't pay the stars any compliments. If they've got a load of wrinkles, I'll paint each one individually. Andrew won't - he's probably just being polite!

In his own publicity material, Skilleter is described as the "best known DOCTOR WHO artist" or something...

Something like that, yes...

And you've been described as the DOCTOR WHO artist in the DWAS Local Group Bulletin.

By poor old Andy Cull, that's right.

Is there any antagonism between the pair of you ?

Andy Cull ? No, we get on fine!

Andrew Skilleter!

Oh sorry. No, I wouldn't say so. We've met a couple of times and written the odd letter or two. We're both interested in each other's work.

So there's no rivalry between you ?

Trying to out-paint each other ? No, I don't think so at all. I think there could be if he was still doing the covers and we were working on alternate titles, but he's not. He has his calendars and what-have-you and the book covers are my territory.

Would you like to work with him on a joint project ?

Oh yes, I'd jump at the chance. That would be great. Actually, in the Cybermen book there's a sort of joint-effort picture. I did the Cyberman helmet and he did the background. I haven't seen it yet so I'm waiting in anticipation for the outcome. Talking of Andrew, did you know we were both born in the Isle of Wight ? Must be something in the tap water...

Is there any other WHO artist that you'd like to be compared to. For example, Skilleter ?

No, what would be the point of that ? There are no comparisons you can make. I mean, if fans were to compile their own Top Ten of **WHO** artists, they'd be wasting their time and demonstrating their own petty limitations. You can't say that I'm 'better' than...say, Lesley Standring - who's a dear friend of mine, incidentally - because there is **no** comparison between our work that you can possibly make. I don't want to be 'better' or 'the best'. I want to be different. Besides, if people are always calling you the greatest, sooner or later you start to believe them and that's very dangerous.

In what way ?

Because you begin to say to yourself: "Well, if I'm supposed to be the best, why wasn't I asked to do the covers for the Titan script books; why wasn't I asked to do the packaging for the Wartime video; why wasn't I asked to do the cover for the **Power of the Daleks** Photonovel...?" and it goes on.

You described the covers as your 'territory'. Are you worried about it being, shall we say, 'invaded', by an up-and-coming new artist ?

Yes, mainly because it's already happened! Colin Howard, whoever he is, is doing the cover for **Attack of the Cybermen.** Pity, really. I'd promised David Banks that I'd put the Cyberleader on it. I had a damn good idea for the design. Oh well, never mind. Kevin Clarke has told me he wants **me** and **only me** to do the cover for **Silver Nemesis,** so I'll stick David on that instead!

Some of Colin's artwork is featured in 25 Glorious Years.

Yes, I know, I've seen it.

You don't sound very impressed.

I don't have to be.

Going back to your ideal dream, you spent some time with Marvel before it came true.

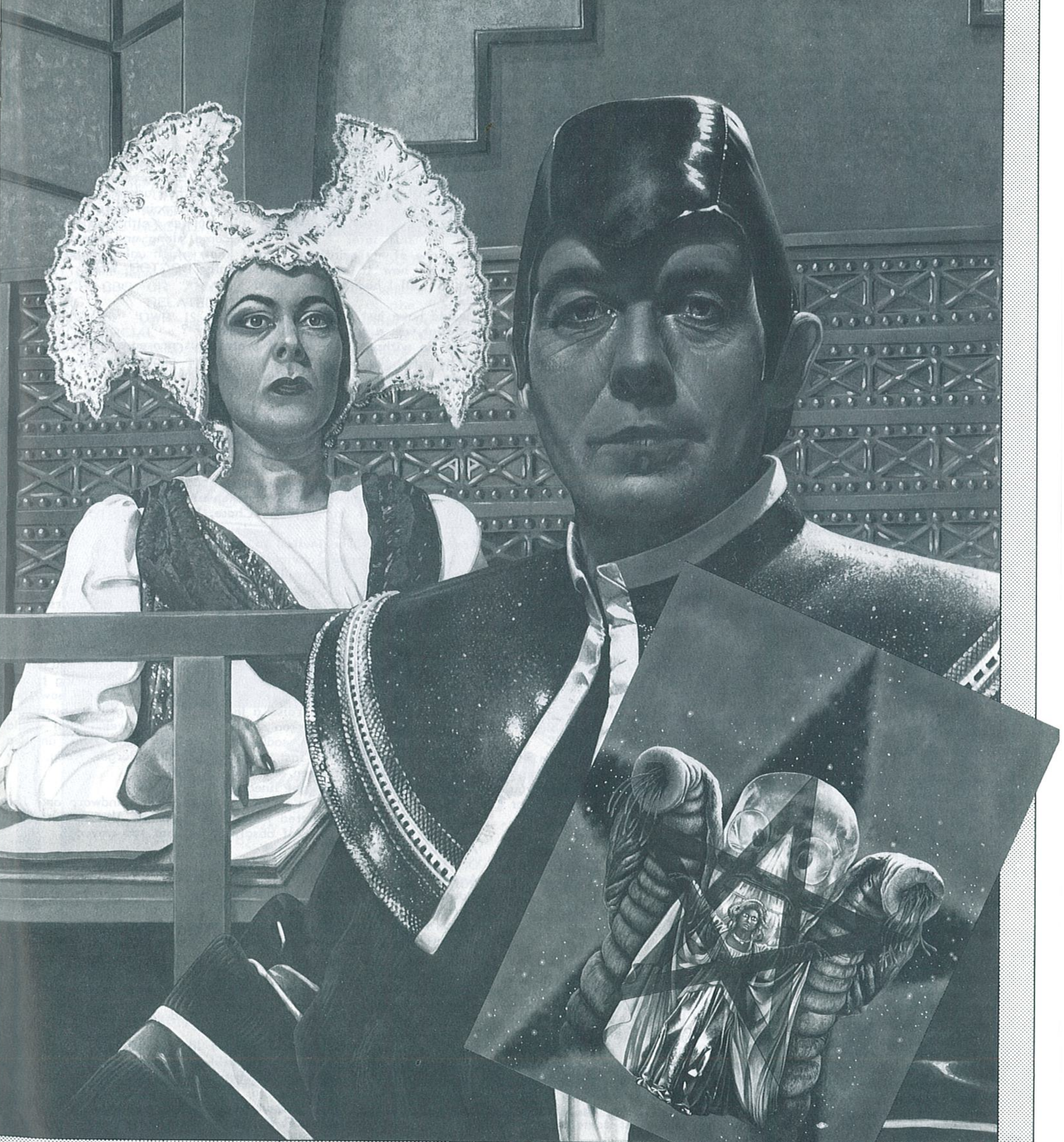
Yes, that was fun on the whole. Sheila Cranna wrote to me months and months after I'd sent her a load of work for the art page that they had going for a while, by which time I'd given up hope, typically.

So that was your first big break, was it ?

In the DOCTOR WHO field, yes. Pity it's all fizzled out. I enjoyed working with Sheila. Very nice. Strong-willed, mind you, and sharp-tongued at times! Got to watch your step! I remember I got into terrible trouble with her over an incident with Anthony Ainley. But she was always supportive and encouraging. My nickname, by the way, for the DWM staff is 'Sheila and the Crannamen'!

Your first poster was the Six...

Oh bloody hell, don't mention **that!** I don't want to talk about that any more. I'll never know what Sheila ever saw in it. It's now lying in my bedroom turned against the wall. I never look at



BELOW: Alister's original cover for 'The Ultimate Foe' which was rejected because Michael Jayston and Lynda Bellingham withdrew their permission to have their likenesses featured.

INSET: Alister's proposed revised artwork for the 'Image of the Fendahl' novel, surely a vast improvement on the original...

it, it's just so terrible. I always say it looks as though I painted it with an emery-board. I've heard of 'grittiness', but that's ridiculous!

Your poster series was very popular.

What there was of it, yes.

Do you have your own posters up on your walls ?

Good God, no!

Anybody else ? Skilleter ? Achilleos ?

No, I don't go in for posters very much. I've just got a few strange photos of myself taken by my brother and one or two pieces of college work that I found and liked when I was having a clear-out.

Will the poster series continue ?

I very much doubt it. You'd better ask John Freeman.

Is each new book cover a challenge ?

It's a challenge to do something different each time. Not necessarily from what has gone before from other artists, but different from what **I've** done in the past. I've found it quite difficult to come up with a new and fresh approach with each one. Although, having said that, I do believe that I've managed to breath a little new life into the covers. They were getting terribly repetitive at one stage. You know, just the TARDIS and a few characters or other elements of the story floating about. Really dull. I don't think any of mine have fallen into that trap, except perhaps **The Smugglers**, but with that at least the elements blended into one another - not very successfully, I grant you. It was an absolute pain to do because, as you know, there are no useful reference photos. It all had to come out of library books.

Has research been a problem ?

Not really, because I have stacks of reference material. **The Smugglers** was the only big headache. I didn't actually want to do it. Most of the others, because they're recent stories, I've been able to watch my own videos and get some ideas. Once I've got photos, sketches and notes together it's just a matter of juggling them around until something gels. I suppose the best example of that is **Delta and the Bannermen.** I don't think anyone else could have come up with that image. By the way, have you noticed the fact that if the two smaller circles (the satellite and the Chimeron egg) were larger and the big circle was slightly smaller, it would form the outline of Mickey Mouse's head upside down ? Bearing in mind where the Nostalgia Trips' bus is supposed to be going, it's rather clever, isn't it ?

In what other ways have you tried to be different ?

Well, with **Edge of Destruction** I thought that after 131 books it was about time that the TARDIS console was put on the cover, so I was quite happy about that one. I think the basic idea worked well: the Doctor's face fading away under an intense white light, but the layout on the printed version has somewhat spoilt the effect I was trying to achieve.

The black box and the new logo can't help ?

Oh don't you start! Everyone is always saying "Oh that awful logo, that dreadful black box, they're completely ruining your lovely pictures..."! I just tell them to shut up! I don't think the black box has ruined any of my pictures. Admittedly, it's spoilt the effect I wanted on one or two - the other being **The Ultimate Foe,** but that's a hopeless painting anyway. It's the **layout** that ruins them. The only one that looks any good in print is **Delta and the Bannermen** because it's lined up and positioned properly. I was annoyed when I saw how much had been chopped-off from **Foe** and **Edge** and the intrusive lettering on the latter. And **The War Machines** is a complete joke! There's a huge gap between the top of Hartnell's hat and the title lettering. It looks ghastly and badly aranged. It reflects badly on me and I'm not to blame.

You had to be helped with 'The War Machines' didn't you ?

I asked for help, simply because of the way I'd chosen to do the illustration. Graeme Wey, together with his trusty airbrush, came to the rescue. He painted those amazing blue circles - don't you just love them ? I think the fame has gone to his head, poor dear!

Which is your favourite cover ?

Oh, we're really getting into the Blue Peter-type questions now, aren't we ? My favourite cover ? **The Face of Evil** by Jeff Cummins - **brilliant!** Curiously enough, it's what I based my revamped **Dragonfire** cover on.

I actually meant which of your own covers do you like best ?

None of them.

You don't mean that, surely ?

Don't tell me what I don't mean, young man!

Um...sorry...

Look, with each painting I've done I'm really keen about it for a week or two and then I go right off it. **Paradise Towers** was a good instance of that. When I'd finished I couldn't stop looking at it. I was staring and staring, getting a real kick out of it, thinking to myself, "You've cracked it this time, Al, you'll bowl 'em over with this one". And everyone who saw it - especially Keith Hopkins who runs the local group I used to attend - raved about it! But I look at the painting now, or a copy of the proof cover, and it stirs nothing - nothing - inside me. I'm not pleased, I'm not proud, I'm not excited...it's just something I've done, big deal. The only paintings that do excite me for a time are the ones that have been auctioned, and even then it's not the artwork but the fact that I'm doing something worthwhile for a change. That's good.

Do your paintings usually turn out better or worse than you anticipated ?

Neither, really. Just different. When you're sat in front of a blank Dalerboard it's impossible to visualise the finished artwork. One has a general idea, of course, about how it might look, but you can never guarantee anything. Now that I think about it, one **was** worse than I'd imagined it would be.

And that was ?

Dragonfire. I stared at that one for ages, trying to work out what was wrong with it once it was completed. I still don't know! Never mind, everyone who saw it at PanoptiCon seemed to like it - including Sophie Aldred who'd given me permission to use her likeness.

What is the reaction from the fans towards you ?

Me or the artwork ? I think they're quite wary of me - and just as well! The artwork ? Very appreciative. Ask loads of questions, usually the Blue Peter-type ones! But that's alright, I don't mind... It was quite funny, really; I had my portfolios set up in a display next to John Fitton's table in the dealers' room at PanoptiCon, the idea being that people would come along, buy their copy of **Foe** and/or **Edge** (which had just been published in hardback/paperback) and then be able to see the original paintings. And ask for an autograph, of course! But several people came along, flicked through my portfolios and then asked how much the pictures were to buy! I had a lot of disappointed customers that day. While I was elsewhere - I think it was Keith's girlfriend who told me this later - some idiot came along and was going on about one of my paintings, I don't know which unfortunately, going on about how it was "Quintessentially DOCTOR WHO". It was just as well I hadn't been there!

Why ?

I would have just laughed in his face.

But that was a great compliment, surely ?

I can do without that sort of pretentious nonsense, thankyou very much. At the same time, there were apparently a couple of young boys going through the work as well and their comments like "Cor! I like that one" are much more gratifying. Anyway, compliments bore me. That's why I've been doing some abstracts recently. I want to shock people, I suppose, into actually **thinking** about what they're **looking** at. I want to branch out and be more adventurous. I've become far too safe and secure in what I'm churning out. It's just pap to please the fans, really, though it's not a conscious effort on my part to do that. I'm bound by the fact that whatever I do for a bookcover has to be publishable. If I did an abstract on, say, **The Chase,** I expect Bretty would have a fit!

Are you hoping to be invited to more conventions ?

Well, I'd like to be, obviously. Who wouldn't ? I enjoy the limelight! The only thing that annoys me about fans - well, there are others, but I'm not going to tell you what they are - fans tend to look at you and say "Oh yes, he's Alister Pearson, he paints bookcovers" and that's as far as their little label goes. Nobody ever asks me what I like doing in my spare time - I'm not going to tell you that, either! I enjoyed writing and performing material with Keith very much. We had a modicum of success at Leisure Hive and PanoptiCon. It's another string to my bow, if you like. Okay, so it's a thin string and a little bow, but at least we managed to raise a laugh. We were gearing ourselves up at one time to appear on stage with Jon Pertwee. That would have been marvellous but, sadly, it all fell through. I had an idea for a sketch set in a fast food café called Burger Kang. My character would have been, wait for it, PIX!

What projects have you got lined up ?

Well, there's another two covers to start with: **Mindwarp** and **The Chase.** I've just completed **Nightmare Fair** (see this issue) which is really bizarre and sort of absctract but not too way out.

And 'The Chase' ?

Oh, that'll be a bloody mess, I expect!

Anything else ?

More work than I know what to do with: The cover for the Doc Matrix II video; the **DWB** Winter Special cover (the most important of them all, naturally!); a poster for a video game; a portrait of Sigourney Weaver for a friend of mine; one of Ed Bishop for another friend; and I've just had a commission from a guy in Brighton for seven pictures - one of each Doctor. I've already done the Troughton portrait. That lot'll probably kill me!

How would you like to be remembered ?

What a charming question! I don't intend to keel over just yet, you know.

Sorry, what I meant was would you like a title; something like 'The King of DOCTOR WHO Artwork' ?

I think 'Queen' is more likely, don't you ? Anyway, when I do expire I hope I'm remembered for doing something better than painting DOCTOR WHO bookcovers.

ALISTER PEARSON, THANK YOU VERY MUCH

DWB 1989

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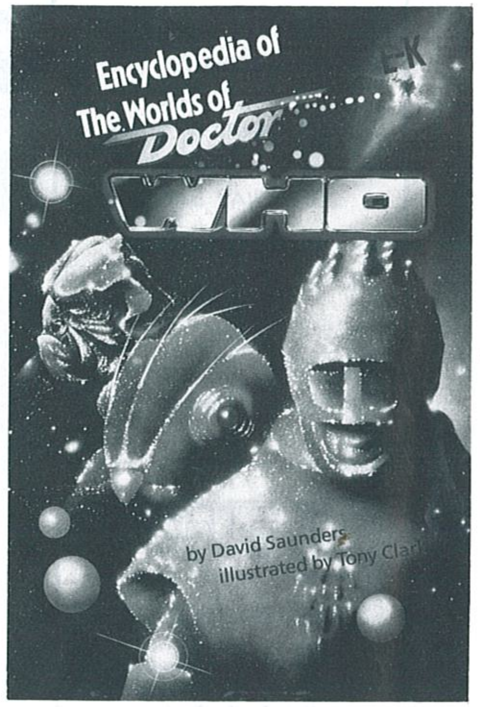
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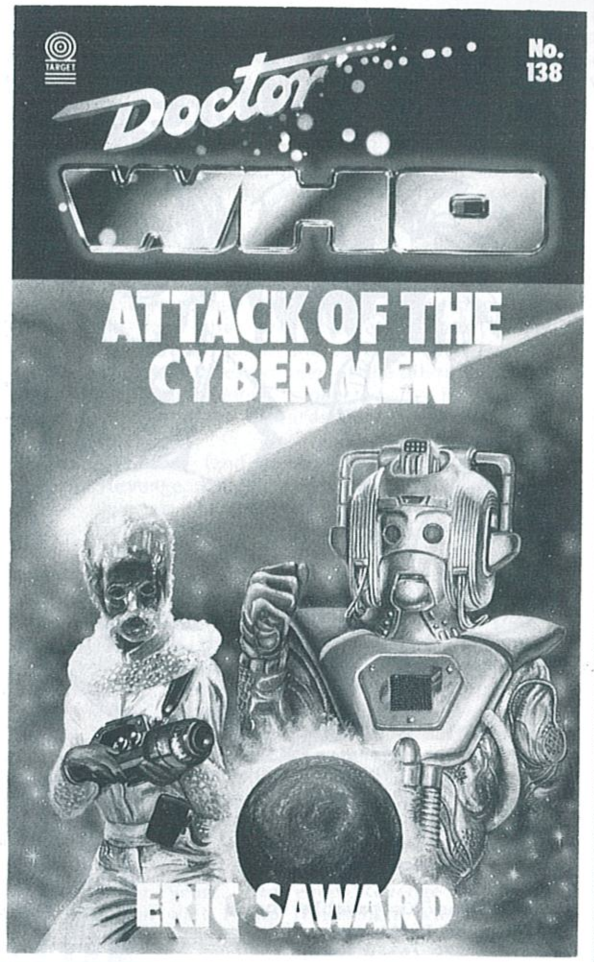

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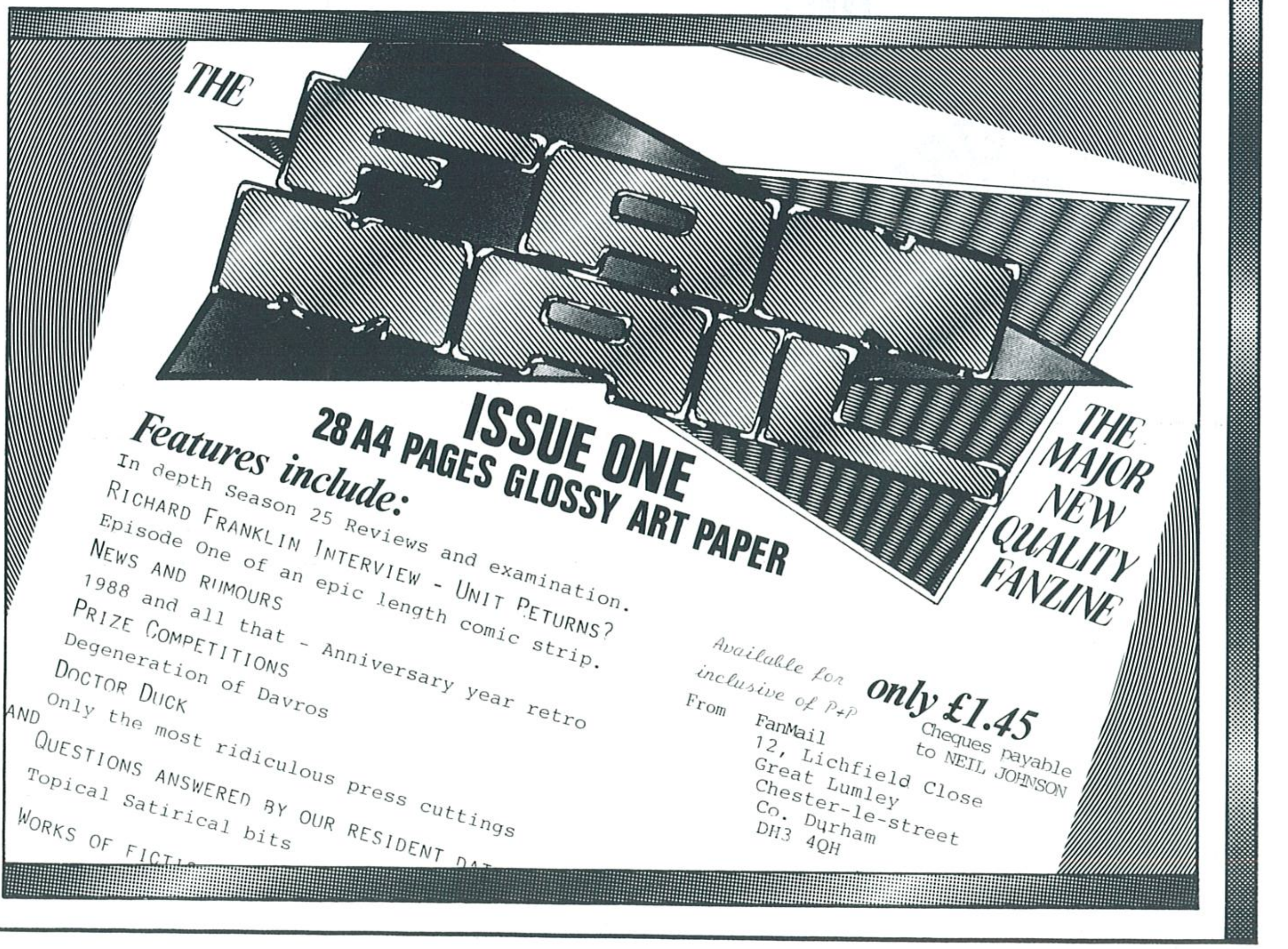
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SEASON 12 (1974/75)

by Jon Way

"FOLLOW THAT!" seemed to be the lasting impression left by 'Planet of the Spiders', and which was reiterated by the omnibus repeat just before the start of Season Twelve.

Perhaps it would have been better not to try; but try they did, and when Tom Baker took over the rôle of the Doctor, it was almost the only thing about the show that had changed. This is hardly surprising, given that it was written, directed and produced by two of the three men who had made **DOCTOR WHO** what it was over the previous five years. Nor, indeed, was it a bad thing, especially since Tom Baker's Doctor would take a bit of getting used to.

The fourth Doctor's character is highlighted and thrown into sharp relief against the familiar background of characters and situations that we'd seen for years. A lot of the fun of **Robot** is to see how the new Doctor will deal with a situation that we all knew the third Doctor could have dealt with admirably.

In the programme's 25 year history, no other Doctor has been given such a gentle start to his reign. Four episodes of this is enough, though, and the new production team wisely decided that to prevent the show becoming stale, it had to move on.

Much has been written about **The Ark in Space** in the years since its single transmission, extolling its virtues as a story and explaining the reasons for the complete rewriting of John Lucarotti's original ideas, the only thing remaining being his story title. Of particular note - and with the benefit of hindsight - it shows that, far from 'finding their feet' having just taken over, the new production team had a very clear idea of where **DOCTOR WHO** should go. Even under the incredible pressures of lack of time and money, they proved themselves capable of delivering the goods.

The Ark in Space could hardly have been more different from **Robot** - gone were the large casts, omnipresent location filming and arrays of stunts and explosions; instead replaced by a sense of claustrophobia imbedded in most of the stories of the Holmes/Hinchcliffe years. The fact that episode one stands alone, carried solely by the three regular cast and two special voice-overs, is testimony enough to the skill of Robert Holmes' writing. Interestingly, it is also a remarkable throwback to the early black and white years of the programme when many episodes followed the adventures of just the time travellers. Ironically, while **DOCTOR WHO** was taking a great step forward, it was also drawing deeply on the past.

It may well be precisely this element which, deprived of the format they'd grown to know and love, reassured the thirteen± viewing millions that this was **DOCTOR WHO** In its finest tradition.

Behind the scenes investigations have revealed that the following story, **The Sontaran Experiment**, was one borne out of necessity rather than deliberate planning. However it seems clear that the main element, the Sontaran himself, was intended to be included from the outset. This story continues the forward trend, that made the early Tom Baker years so memorable, by drawing on the past which allows more ambitious plans to be set against a backdrop of 'known' **DOCTOR WHO.** The Sontaran, of course, is the most obvious past link, and an effective one it is too.

The public and fans alike enjoy the return of old monsters and in general most fans seem to accept **DOCTOR WHO** most easily when it meets the simple condition of being at least four years old. Personally, I find that the return of a monster/creature swiftly after its first appearance forces me to accept the original story as 'part of **WHO** history' far more swiftly than I might otherwise do so. By the same token, the appearance of Styre both reassures the audience that it is the same programme as last year, and yet forces the Jon Pertwee years into the show's past.

The second reference to the show's past is the return, after **The Ark in Space**, to the extensive use of location work. This, too, works for both the forward moving and retrospective elements of the story. Retrospective because the Pertwee era was the time when locations were used most and with greater variety than at any other time, and forwards because it was a bold experiment in 1974 to make an entire story, even a two-parter, on location, especially on videotape.

As a side-thought, perhaps it was to minimize the transportation of props to the locations for this (and the next) story that the TARDIS was 'written out' for most of the season. This, I feel, was not the best move, since the continued absence of the familiar police box is bound to make the audience uneasy about the credentials of the new Doctor. Nothing establishes a new incarnation of the Doctor so quickly as a shot of him operating the controls of, or stepping from, his TARDIS.

Genesis of the Daleks follows the same pattern of mixing the old with the new, although maybe it is appropriate that the 'old' seems to gain the upper hand. Sylvester McCoy's recent comment about not being the Doctor until he'd met the Daleks sums up public opinion well. Indeed, I'm surprised that only one Doctor has so far met the Daleks in his opening story. Personally speaking I would find the temptation irresistable!

Film on location, gleaming studio work and Daleks make very powerful images of an archetypal **DOCTOR WHO.** But the strength of the story lay in the new elements that Robert Holmes and Philip Hinchcliffe were introducing to the series: strong, clearly defined characters, with purpose and motive, and fast-paced, hard-hitting drama that almost forced the viewer into reacting to it - into believing in the situations and events and empathizing with the reactions of the people portrayed. It was these elements which made the story so disturbingly frightening - not so much **what** was happening, but the fact that we **believed** it was happening, and happening to people that we knew and cared about.

Genesis of the Daleks shines as one of the all-time brilliant stories of **DOCTOR WHO,** a judgement supported by its three, to date, screenings. From this point onwards there was no 'new' Doctor, there was only **the** Doctor.

It is because of this (and another case of the 'Follow **that**' syndrome) that **Revenge of the Cybermen** falls down somewhat. Once again we have an old monster helping to establish the Fourth Doctor, but by this stage he didn't **need** any more establishing. The very attempt screams of overkill. Granted that the Cybermen had not been seen in their own adventure for over six years, and there was the added interest of seeing them in colour for the first time, but the novelty of colour television had worn off by that time, and director Michael Briant's determination to shine as many different coloured lights on them as possible seemed a little self-conscious.

Having satiated the audience's desire for nostalgia, it was time to try something new. **Revenge of the Cybermen** was certainly not that, and while the story itself is adequate, it suffered from a lack of 'spark', possibly due to the considerable number of rewrites involved. However, as was hinted at in **Genesis of the Daleks,** and demonstrated admirably in **The Ark in Space,** the exceptionally high quality of the design elements - care of Roger Murray Leach - succeeded in holding the viewers' attention. Indeed, excellent designs coupled with strong scripts were the staple ingredients of the early Tom Baker years, and even **Revenge of the Cybermen** indicates the direction that Philip Hinchcliffe was pushing the show towards.

However the Cyberman story pushed nostalgia to its limits leaving one a little wary of things from the Doctor's past. Perhaps it was just as well that the UNIT story was held over until the next season...

SEASON 13 (1975/76)

by David Owen

THE CHANGES to DOCTOR WHO that occurred during its thirteenth season were so gradual as to be barely noticeable at the time, yet in retrospect it was this season that most carried out the transition from the cosy familiarity possessed by the series of the early seventies to the far more cosmic wide-ranging stories that closed the decade.

The most fundamental change can be observed by comparing that treatment of contemporary Earth provided by Robert Banks Stewart and Douglas Camfield at the season's opening and close. In **Terror of the Zygons** the Doctor, Sarah and Harry return hurriedly to help the Brigadier deal with a threat that has been brought to his attention, for which he consults his friend, the Doctor. Contrast this with the Doctor's first appearance in **The Seeds of Doom,** casually handing out advice and dealing with UNIT as just another group of protagonists on another planet alien to him. Harry Sullivan's non-appearance in this story is not even commented on.

The season stressed to the viewer that the Doctor was not human and that the Earth was not his home (as he himself stressed in the opening episode of **Pyramids of Mars**), with a depth not felt since the 1960s. The Doctor's insistence that Moberley, a mere zoologist, amputate the arm of his mutating colleague because humanity must learn to help itself, clashes wildly with the double-heartbeat and Venusian lullaby gags of the Pertwee era.

Perhaps one reason for the success of this season's changes was the boldness with which it was presented. Moving the series forward so that it ran from autumn to spring rather than winter to summer meant that the stories could be enjoyed in the cold darkness of the winter when suspense and horror are traditionally both set and appreciated. The by now wide acceptance of Tom Baker as the Doctor meant that the series was now enjoying a high profile amongst both media and merchandisers which cannot have failed to keep interest alive.

Another generator of interest in this season was the abandonment of the **DOCTOR WHO** themes, such as the Brigadier, the Daleks, Bessie and the Cybermen and the adoption of another strong theme for each story that the more casual viewer would be asked to latch onto, such as the Loch Ness Monster, Egyptology, or Frankenstein. This led to the stories being much more memorable in their own right than in the previous season where continuity had been far more important, arguably leading to the whole far eclipsing its constituents.

Terror of the Zygons opens the proceedings in style, by clinging to a slightly Avengers-like chic, yet produced and performed in all seriousness, keeping things believable at all times - a secret that has helped the series through the twin droughts of low budget and public disinterest before and since. Particularly noteworthy are the blending of beautiful scenery with an atmosphere of pure disquiet, the sheer alienness of the Zygons themselves, and the topicality of the North Sea Oil background. A strong all-rounder.

From home to the very edge of the universe for the next four-parter, Louis Marks' **Planet of Evil.** As the evenings of 1975 drew in, a much darker, macabre edge came to the series. The claustrophobic isolation of Zeta Minor gave chilling credibility to the notion of a being (un-being ?) that could suck the very life from an individual. This was perhaps the first quintessential horror **DOCTOR WHO** story, aided by one of the most memorable alien settings ever. Less obvious a popular non-**DOCTOR WHO** theme than in the previous story is **Planet of Evil**'s strong borrowing from Doctor Jekyll And Mr.Hyde. It was not alone this season in exposing the risks of the process of discovery.

Had Professor Scarman's discovery of Sutekh's prison not taken place, then neither would the plot of the following story, **Pyramids of Mars.** Popular mythologies again exploited, with the familiar images of Egyptian mummies and late Victorian England bizarrely juxtaposed and ingeniously explained. The ghost of UNIT still hovered in the setting of the story on the sight of its future headquarters.

It returned more strongly in the next, underrated story, **The Android Invasion,** more as a set of clues - uniforms, Geneva HQ etc. - than a continuing cast of characters, although Benton and Harry did appear fleetingly. It is perhaps less remembered than its contemporaries due to the safe absence in this season of any obvious influence from popular literature or mythology - ironically the only way this could have come about would have been by writer Terry Nation introducing his most famous creations!

Following the Christmas break, daylight was again banished from our screens for the ultimate gothic story, **The Brain of Morbius.** Dr.Frankenstein's castle was deposited into the equally sinister setting of Karn. Although marred by the rather silly desire of Solon to craft the Doctor's head on to his monstrosity rather than use his entire body, this story is memorable for such scenes as the blind Sarah stumbling on Morbius' tank, or the Doctor confronting one of his own race head on (literally) for the first time since his battles with the Master.

It was back to Earth for the curtain-closing **The Seeds of Doom,** the only six-parter this season and the last UNIT story. The previous settings of an isolated survey station and an English country house were combined for this final tour de force. The chilling sense of creeping infection paralleled the Antarctic setting, and the sheer inhumanity of Chase and Scorby both endangering the world with their completely different scales of greed. There was no question of Sarah remaining on Earth at the story's close: her natural habitat was now, like the Doctor's, not Earth.

If there was a single pervading theme to the thirteenth season, it was the reawakening of the dead or dormant. Just as, on screen, explorers and exploiters re-awoke or disturbed the Zygons, the equilibrium of the universe, Sutekh, Morbius, and the Krynoid, so, off-screen, did Philip Hinchcliffe and Robert Holmes rediscover a multiplicitude of popular fictional themes, each enriching this confident season beautifully.

SEASON 14 (1976/77)

by Ian McLachlan

I AM SURE that when I first sat down to watch DOCTOR WHO on the 30th November 1963, I never in my wildest dreams imagined myself still watching the same programme some twenty-five years later!

I do remember my father asking me during **The Web Planet** how long I intended to continue watching it so devotedly, saying he could foresee it still being on when I was eighteen! Well, like William Hartnell, his estimate of the longevity of the programme was somewhat out!

During those twenty-five years there have been times when I have been keener on the series than others. Certainly the programme was never the same for me when Susan left, and I well remember my disgust when Patrick Troughton took over the rôle as I felt he was taking the programme less than seriously! But the first story which I turned off altogether was **Carnival of Monsters** and I well remember saying to people that the show had definitely degenerated and that it was "not as good as it used to be...". However I know fans who were saying that seriously around the time of **The Celestial Toymaker**!

But I have stayed faithful to the programme that I had fallen in love with on that cold November night, despite my subsequent misgivings, and I did in fact enjoy much of the Troughton era, especially when Wendy Padbury joined the TARDIS crew! The Pertwee era was fine, too, and it was during that time that I first became involved in **WHO** fandom when I found out about the **DOCTOR WHO** Fan Club run by Keith Miller. Target books started around the end of the Pertwee era and this renewed my flagging interest in the show, with the promise of some of my favourite adventures appearing in print and myself at last being given the opportunity of reliving those adventures which had played such a large part in shaping my childhood. Only now, some fifteen years after Target started, are the last of these early adventures seeing print. The fact that I have had to wait for them for so long has perhaps made me appreciate them all the more.

So what of Season Fourteen which started on the 4th September 1976 ? Well, this was the year when I completed my university career. I had been at St.Andrews for the past five years and for much of that time I had been one of many people who crowded into the common room to watch **DOCTOR WHO** each Saturday afternoon. I had a black and white television in my room...just in case the crowd decided one Saturday to watch something on one of the other channels. However watching it in the common room meant that I got the opportunity of seeing it in colour, although to be honest I didn't really enjoy it quite so much watching with other people as they tended to laugh in the oddest of places and I had never really seen the programme as being funny. To me watching **DOCTOR WHO** was a serious business! Even now, I would much rather watch it alone.

For this season of **DOCTOR WHO** I was in a privileged position. I was now a Sub-Warden and this meant that I had access to a small common room which also had a colour television. This common room was used by only about a dozen people and so on a Saturday afternonn it meant I could watch **DOCTOR WHO** in relative peace, and sometimes, if I was lucky, **alone**! Perhaps this is one of the reasons why, if I were asked to select my favourite season from the 1970s, it would be this one.

When **DOCTOR WHO** first started, it was a case of you either watched it on a Saturday or you never saw that particular episode, having to rely instead on other peoples' rather hazy memories. Nowadays of course things are different. I rarely see **DOCTOR WHO** 'live' and I can look back over past adventures if I so choose. However in 1976 this of course was not possible. It is hard now to really remember what I thought of Season Fourteen when it was first transmitted, but I do know that I didn't enjoy it as much as I enjoyed those early black and white days. However I also know that I enjoyed it more than I have enjoyed the more recent seasons.

It is interesting to note that out of all the possible stories BBC Enterprises could release as videos, they have already selected two from this season: **The Robots of Death** and **The Talons of Weng Chiang.** In fact it is obvious which **DOCTOR WHO** producer they regard as being the best. Now while I would still say that I preferred '60s **WHO,** I would agree that of the '70s/'80s producers, Philip Hinchcliffe was undoubtedly the best, and that unlike many other producers who deteriorated as they continued on the show - Barry Letts, Graham Williams, John Nathan-Turner, etc. - Hinchcliffe was unusual in that he got **better** with each succeeding season. Season Twelve was good, Season Thirteen even better, but Season Fourteen was his pinnacle of achievement. There is no story in that season that I dislike and it contains my favourite Tom Baker story of all as well as others that would rank very highly in my 'All-time Favourite **DOCTOR WHO** Story Poll'.

The stories had a variety about them. They could very much be described as being adventures in space and time. Two of them had historical backdrops - **The Masque of Mandragora** and **Talons of Weng Chiang** - and it was the historical stories rather than the science fiction ones which I enjoyed most about **DOCTOR WHO** in the first place. I was never very good at science at school but quite good a history, so much so that I even ended up teaching i and I will always credit the series as giving me my love of history. I've always been particularly interested in the 15th Century so I was delighted to find that **The Masque of Mandragora** was set in this time period. Victorian London has also always fascinated me and I well remember all the early '60s classic serials set in that period and I always had a secret yearning to have been brought up in that era!

While I certainly enjoyed this season when it was first transmitted, looking at it now I realise just how good it really was. All the stories are, well, stories. They have beginnings, middles and ends. True, they have their faults, but then doesn't every story ? It is just that the faults in these stories are nothing like as major as the faults in many present-day **WHOs**, and the good points of these stories far outweigh the bad, unlike nowadays where the bad points dominate.

I remember **The Masque of Mandragora** mostly for the number of cliffhangers at the end of the first episode. I always liked these endings which made you turn on next week to see what happened and **Masque** didn't just give you one - it gave you several. I also liked the fact that the Doctor had to get involved in this story for the simple reason that most of the things that went wrong only did so because of him. Certain things wouldn't have happened if he hadn't let the Mandragora Helix get out of his TARDIS. The story used its shistorical context well and there was, in a sense, two stories running parallel through it: the battle between Giuliano and Count Frederico, which took up most of the first three episodes, is very much a 'historical story', whereas the fourth episode became a full-blown science fiction adventure as the Doctor confronted the Helix. **The Masque of Mandragora** was Philip Hinchcliffe's favourite adventure and it is certainly one of mine: there is a great deal going on at all times; it resembles a Shakespearian tragedy; and it is comparable to **The Crusade** in both dialogue and style, but also contains a science fiction streak running through it which the Hartnell tale lacked and thus gives it added substance. At the time I didn't realise it was shot in part at Portmerion, the location for The Prisoner, another of my favourite television series. It says something for the production team that I didn't realise that they were using that location and that I wondered just where had they shot these convincingly Italian settings.

The Hand of Fear is, for my money, one of the most underrated **WHO** adventures. The previous story had been set of Earth in a past period of time. **The Hand of Fear** opens with that sequence on Kastria and helps to reinforce the idea that **DOCTOR WHO** has a very wide canvas on which its stories can unfold. My biggest complaint about that story's beginning was that I couldn't always make out what was being said. I thought that before too long the Doctor and Sarah would land on this strange planet, but it was not to be. They had landed instead on present-day Earth! One of the nice things about this story was that it didn't stay in the same place for the duration. I always preferred the adventures which didn't confine their action to a couple of hundred yards. Part of the reason that **The Keys of Marinus** is my all-time favourite **WHO** is that it is really five adventures for the price of one six-parter! **Hand** is really two stories; one set on Earth, the other on Kastria, and this I feel gives the story a pace which is lacking in some others. The scene that really remains in my memory is the climax to episode one where Sarah sits crosslegged and transfixed as the fossilised hand regenerates and moves. It is an enormously spooky scene and to this day I feel that the effect is one of the best ever shown in the programme. Of course I knew that Sarah was due to leave very soon, and I wondered whether she would in fact survive her final adventure. Thankfully she did, but I got the impression the production team were making you wonder right up until the last moment. Another scene that I really enjoyed was the one where Professor Watson phones his wife to tell her he would be home late. This was the kind of scene which featured quite a lot in the early days, and while not adding to the plot, colours in the person's character so they have depth rather than simply just being there as a part of the action. One of the things I liked best about **Remembrance of the Daleks** was the café scene; a nice touch which gave you an insight into the Doctor's character, as the above scene did for the Professor's. It was certainly a surprise when Eldrad appeared, not as the standard male monster but as a female! I'm not sure whether it was a good idea to have Eldrad revert back to being a male in the final episode, but for me Judith Paris gave an excellent performance. I was sad to see Sarah leave at the end of the story. For me she was the best companion of the '70s, and although I liked Leela too, there was something particularly likeable about the yound feminist journalist.

I was certainly very excited at the end of **The Hand of Fear** to learn that the Doctor was setting off for his home-world again. It was thrilling to think that a whole story was to be set on the planet we had previously only seen glimpses of. Would it live up to my expectations ? I was in the DWAS when **The Deadly Assassin** was first shown and I was amazed at the reaction to it. It was universally panned for its 'continuity mistakes', plot holes, characterization of the Time Lords, etc. On reflection it was very brave to attempt a story set on the Doctor's home-world, a world hinted at from the very first episode. Probably, if I was entirely honest, I would have to confess that I too was a little disappointed to discover that the Time Lords were really only a decrepit bunch of argumentative old men. However I suppose it would have been nigh impossible to have set the story in a world of superbeings. **The Deadly Assassin** was very much a whodunnit. You wondered who it was that was in league with the Master, but it was fairly obvious from early on that Goth was the 'baddie'. This story, like its two predecessors, didn't stay on the same track for its entire four episodes. Episode three saw us moving away from Gallifrey for most of the episode's duration into the strange world of the Matrix. At the time I felt that I wanted to see more of Time Lord society, but now I can see the third episode for what it was - a very good piece of drama. Certainly there were shades of Star Trek: Arena about it, but for my money the Fourth Doctor versus Goth were more interesting protagonists than Captain Kirk and the Gorn. There is much to commend this story, my favourite of the Tom Baker era. There were some wonderful characters on Gallifrey: Engin, the doddery old Co-ordinator; Castellan Spandrell, the greatest Castellan of them all; Goth, the smooth politician; the Master, at his most hideous and evil, and certainly a lot more impressive than his most recent incarnation; and Runcible, although I wasn't sure whether he was played as 'straight' as he might have been, but it was certainly a shock when he met his untimely end! But of all the characters in this story it was Borusa that most impressed me. Only on screen for a short time, I found him a fascinating character, very much the politician, being prepared to change history because it suited him. How unlike the Doctor in **The Aztecs** who insisted that history couldn't be changed! I was glad to see the character back in **The Invasion of Time** and **Arc of Infinity,** but I was sorry that they eventually turned him into an out-and-out baddie in **The Five Doctors.** I wonder what Robert Holmes thought of **that!** Three production teams had a hand in his character, but for me the first incarnation of Borusa was his best.

The series then rested over Christmas with the welcome repeats of **The Brain of Morbius** and **Pyramids of Mars** (both edited), and in the New Year Season Fourteen resumed with a story which posed the perplexing question of how Tom Baker's head came to be sculptured on to the side of a cliff ? Once again this adventure really came about because of the Doctor's mistake. **The Face of Evil** was probably my least favourite of the season, mainly because I'm not that keen on 'primitive-tribes-from-the-future' stories. I liked the reference to the Daleks in this adventure as it gave the story a continuity without being intrusive, as it all too often is today. Leela I liked and she was a lot more preferable to having a Sarah Jane 'clone'. The story had some interesting ideas, not least the idea of a computer speaking in lots of different voices - the scene where the Doctor is confronted by all the voices and images was one I found particularly eerie at the time and is one of my strongest memories of this story.

The Robots of Death would appear to be the 'cheap' story of the season, confined as it is to a television studio. However this actually works to the story's advantage as it is very claustrophobic in atmosphere and invokes memories of the kind of adventure that Patrick Troughton often found himself embroiled in; a small community cut off from the rest of the world and facing an unseen menace from without, and within. The robots themselves were extremely impressive, there handsome faces and pleasant voices disguising their terrifying secret and making them all the more chilling as they struck off their victims, one by one. **The Robots of Death** was, like **The Deadly Assassin,** very much a whodunnit. A **real** whodunnit though and not like **Terror of the Vervoids** where by the end you weren't exactly sure who had done what! I actually guessed the identity of Taren Capel before it was revealed on screen, although that didn't detract from my enjoyment of the story. From newspaper articles which appeared at the time, I assumed that Toos, played by Pamela Salem, would be staying as a regular companion. Sadly, though, that was not to be.

The season finished with **The Talons of Weng Chiang,** another splendidly atmospheric tale. You certainly felt, just by watching, that you had been transported back in time to Victorian London such was the realism of the production, and in many ways it was more historical than science fiction. It was rich in characters: the magician Li Hsen Chang, played by John Bennett whose work I have admired since I first saw him in the Terence Dudley thriller The River Flows East; the wonderful partnership of Litefoot and Jago (Trevor Baxter and Christopher Benjamin) who were at one stage considered for a spin-off series of their own; and of course Greel himself, beautifully portrayed by the late Michael Spice. His deformed make-up was grotesque, but it was on screen just long enough - after Leela had ripped his mask off - without causing offence. **The Talons of Weng Chiang** was very much a 'character story', relying on dialogue and good acting to create the right atmosphere. It was the giant rat that, for me, let the production down. It simply did not convince me at all, and strangely around the same time The New Avengers had an adventure called Gnaws about a giant rat written by Dennis Spooner. They opted for using a real rat in miniature tunnels and I thought it worked far better. However, as I've mentioned, all **WHO** stories have their faults, but it is a shame when an effect or costume spoils an otherwise good story.

And so ended the Fourteenth Season of **DOCTOR WHO,** and my time at university. This season had a 'completeness' to it. There was a good variety of adventures and I remember it was unusual to have a companion debut mid-season and one leaving after just a few episodes. There was excitement, superb acting and even some comedy which **didn't** detract from the more serious moments. After it was over I felt sure that the Fifteenth Season would build on what had been achieved and prove to be even better. However with the appointment of a new producer this was not to be. In my opinion no season since has been as good as Season Fourteen. And what of the Doctor ? I would say that this was Tom Baker's finest season in the part. By now he was firmly established as the Doctor and in total command of the rôle. His Doctor was never dull or predictable and you never quite knew what he was going to do next. He was commanding, he was charismatic, above all he was interesting. And he was without some of the silliness which sadly crept into his interpretation when Graham Williams came along and tried to substiture the horror with satire.

The fact that two videos from this season have already been released shows that it is not a season where "the memory cheats". It was a fine season of **DOCTOR WHO** stories, but it was also a season with six good pieces of drama as well.

SEASON 15 (1977/78)

by Justin Richards

THE FIFTEENTH SEASON of DOCTOR WHO was one of variety and of change. Each story had its own individual style, some quite different to the dark Gothic feel that viewers were used to. The production team too underwent changes, as did the line-up in the TARDIS.

With Philip Hinchcliffe gone from the post of producer - a season later than he had originally intended - the job was handed to Graham Williams. Robert Holmes stayed on as script editor, but only for half the season, when Anthony Read took over. Already changes in style and direction for the show were apparent.

Partly these changes were the result of the outcry over the horror of the previous season, especially the Whitehouse/Curran argument over **The Deadly Assassin.** Partly they reflected the ideas and enthusiasm of the new young producer and his script editors. And partly, although it was vehemently denied, they were a reaction to the heightened expectations for special effects following the cinema release (during the season) of the film Star Wars.

The most obvious new special effect was K9. Introduced in **The Invisible Enemy,** he immediately caused trouble. The season had to be rejigged, once Williams had decided to keep K9 on, so that **The Invisible Enemy,** although recorded first, was shown after **Horror of Fang Rock.** The idea of writing K9 into, and navigating him round, a lighthouse was bad enough. But the season-opener had its own problems.

Terrance Dicks' first script, The Witch Lords, having been shelved because executives felt it would reflect badly on the BBC's prestige production of Dracula, starring Louis Jordan, Robert Holmes persuaded Dicks to write a story set in a lighthouse. Terrance Dicks was not keen on the idea, and had very little time to write it. Once written, the production was handled at Birmingham's Pebble Mill studios (for the only time in **DOCTOR WHO**'s history), which caused its own problems. Director Paddy Russell coped well, insisting on having a Television Centre visual effects team brought in since Birmingham had little expertise in this area. Luckily **Fang Rock** was not an effects-intensive show. Rather it was atmospheric character drama, playing on the claustrophobia and interaction of people trapped in a confined area by an alien nasty - a Rutan.

The Invisible Enemy, on the other hand, is one of the most effects-orientated stories ever made for **DOCTOR WHO.** Early on in the production cycle the decision was made to split the effects work between Ian Scoones (doing the miniatures) and Tony Harding (for the studio effects). The script was a space opera, paying homage en route to the film Fantastic Voyage. While the monster was not too impressive once grown from inside the Doctor's own nervous system, the miniature work was visually flawless. K9 himself worked well within the confines of the Bi-Al Foundation, not least because of its flat corridors.

For **Image of the Fendahl,** brought forward to third in the season, more rewriting was needed. However, here it was mainly in the opening and closing sequences, to say where K9 had got to, and to offer some explanation for Leela's apparently constant switching of clothes between stories.

Up to this point in the season, with Robert Holmes still script editing and Graham Williams finding his feet as producer, the show was not totally dissimilar to earlier Baker stories. The atmosphere of threat and creeping, shadowed horror was still there. The monsters were still sometimes a let-down when they emerged from the shadows and imaginations into the light and latex. But all this was to change.

The Sun Makers, although written by Robert Holmes, pointed a new direction for the programme. The darker undertones were still there, but the emphasis was on wit and satirical humour. This was a trend that was to continue in the Williams era. And it was not always appreciated or understood. How many of the younger fans realised the satirical edge of the story was even there ? Probably those who still see the Williams years as nothing more than slapstick haven't yet got all the sophisticated jokes.

Fewer jokes, though, in **Underworld.** Here the subtlety was in the hiding of the references to the story's narrative roots. The Jackson/Jason hints were fairly obvious, as was Herrick for Hericles and Orfe for Orpheus. But Tala for Atlanta, and the names of the ships (P7E for Persephone and R1C for Argosy) were better disguised.

However, the production of the show failed to live up to the script (although the story's ending is a little contrived and obvious). The decision to use model caves and ChromaKey the actors into them was a brave attempt to overcome the difficulties that arose with location filming, but it failed to give the depth of field necessary to be totally convincing. The model effects of the spaceships were rather better, making the first episode near-classic **DOCTOR WHO,** with its references to "Time ships of the Gods" and the R1C being bombarded with meteorites and forming into a planet.

The good model work continued into the final story of the season, **The Invasion of Time.** An odd story, this divides - like so many six-part stories - into a four and a two-parter. The first four episodes were appreciated by all fans. Baker's odd behaviour to confuse and outwit the Vardans even scored a mention in The Times (for part three). But the final two episodes became more of a run-around, featuring the infamous brick-walled TARDIS.

The Invasion of Time is typical in many ways of Season Fifteen as a whole. Much of it is extremely good. The dialogue is witty, the atmosphere tense. There are extensions to the show's mythology throughout the season: The Fendahl and the fifth planet; the Minyans; and the whole culture revisited and revitalised in this final story. But the end result, like the season, is varied. A bit of everything, but no cohesive whole. There are many notable performances and characters; Skinsale, Gatherer Hade, Castellan Kelner, and just about everyone in **Image of the Fendahl.** The effects are variable; the model work usually good, the studio effects often less so.

There are several reasons why the fifteenth season of **DOCTOR WHO** is not one of the most popular. One is this lack of cohesion in both narrative and production standards. Another is that it followed immediately on from the very popular Hinchcliffe seasons. It also preceded the Key To Time season. As a result it is rather lost between these. But while the season as a whole is not as impressive as those that sandwich it, several of the individual stories are **DOCTOR WHO** at its best, albeit in different areas. At no time is the season less than entertaining - and that is, after all, what matters.

SEASON 16 (1978/79)

by Dominic May

IT HARDLY SEEMS TEN YEARS since I was sat in front of the television transfixed by Graham Williams' most successfully produced season of DOCTOR WHO such are my vivid memories of watching it.

After the enormous drastic strengths of Season 14 under Philip Hinchcliffe, newcomer Williams' first productions had seemed rather tame to my way of thinking, so much so that on the odd occasions when I could not be in on a Saturday evening for my regular twenty-five minute fix, I did not suffer severe withdrawal symptoms. Season Sixteen soon put a stop to that.

One of the season's major strengths was the use of the umbrella theme of the search for the Key To Time. For the first time in ages I could not afford to miss an episode because there was always the possibility that the dastardly Black Guardian might suddenly turn up. As it happened, it was not until the final story that he appeared but I was not to know that, and thus the audience was skilfully manipulated by the production team, particularly during **The Stones of Blood.** Even though the Key To Time was an added bonus for myself and presumably other like-minded fans, the theme did not intrude too much into the casual audience's perception of the series in that there were still six new stories which in themselves had definite beginnings and endings. The E-Space trilogy in Season Eighteen worked in this way also, but sadly Season Twenty-Three's **Trial of a Time Lord** fell down miserably because of the intrusion of the trial scenes, plus the weakness of most of the stories.

In my view, five out of the six tales which made up Season Sixteen were enjoyable. Only **The Power of Kroll** failed to entertain, which despite being scripted by the late Robert Holmes was yawn-inducing from beginning to end. The whole production lacked enthusiasm ranging from the rather poor realisation of the Swampies to the extremely poor realisation of Kroll it/him/herself. Acting was generally unconvincing, typified by Mary Tamm's end-of-episode scream when she is being offered as a sacrifice to Kroll. Even the appearance of Jack Rolfe as Rohm Dutt could not increase my level of interest, thus I was grateful when the Doctor collected the fifth segment of the Key To Time and dematerialised off Delta Magna or wherever it was called. To give the production team their due, they probably did their best but perhaps were over-ambitious in their expectations.

Having rid myself of what I consider to be the negative side of the season, the other five stories were joys to watch albeit for varying reasons.

The season opener, **The Ribos Operation,** another Bob Holmes script, was rich in character and dialogue and boasted a strong cast. Accolades for memorable performances go to Iain Cuthbertson for Garron, Paul Seed for the Graff and Nigel Plaskitt for Unstoffe, who managed to better his previous main TV exposure as the lad with the cold in the Sinex advert. Although a studio-based story, I found myself succombing to the illusion due to the conviction of both the actors and the script. Not widely regarded as one of his greatest, **The Ribos Operation** nevertheless displays all the best traits of Robert Holmes' writing by which he has subsequently been judged. **Ribos** is not a story to watch for a cracking good plot, but for character and atmosphere it is a must. Director George Spenton-Foster made the most of the resources that were available to him. The early scenes with the White Guardian, which provided the premise for the whole season, although somewhat whimsical, were strangely disconcerting as well.

The Pirate Planet was an ingenious script and the first for **DOCTOR WHO** from the pen of Douglas Adams, a man who a year later was to have become notorious among many fans. Like most of Adams' ideas, his thinking was ingenious, and having the planet Callufrax as the second segment and Zanak as a planet eater were both surprising and clever. He also created a sad villain in the shape of the Captain, admirably brought to life by actor Bruce Purchase, while disguising the real baddie Xanxia until near the end of the tale. All in all, the story sparkled with good ideas albeit written in a slightly camp manner, but the viewer was dragged along by the enthusiasm within. For example, Mr Fibuli was a ludicrous character but you could not help feel for him as his friend the Captain lay dying. Certain elements of the story did not quite gell but this was due mainly to some rather unconvincing acting by the Mentiads and the townspeople of Zanak, particularly Primi Townsend as Mula. The regulars worked well together and one could tell that Romana was beginning to realise that there was far more to the Doctor than what necessarily appeared on the surface. Kiddywinks wtching the programme would almost certainly have enjoyed the battle between K9 and the Polyphase Avatron, another ingenious Adams idea.

The season then moved into top gear with David Fisher's **The Stones of Blood.** This was in effect the fifteenth anniversary story for **DOCTOR WHO** and thankfully Graham Williams decided to omit the scene with the birthday cake from the transmitted version and let the story do the celebrating. It is difficult to define what makes this tale so appealing except that the premise of Cessair of Diplos and the Ogri is strong. This story had menace (the approach of the Ogri was frightening, even to someone of my age), humour (Professor Rumford and the courtroom scenes involving the Megara were highly entertaining) and pathos (K9's apparent destruction was really quite sad). The late Beatrix Lehmann provided an excellent foil for the Doctor during this story and it would have been most interesting had she become a companion, certainly a better idea than Tom Baker's 'talking cabbage'. The memory that remains most with me about **The Stones of Blood** is the thumping heartbeat sound of the Ogri. Although not especially well designed, they were quite eerie. My only complaint about the story was that Susan Engel's portrayal of Vivien Fay was too obvious.

Following **The Stones of Blood** was another David Fisher tale, **The Androids of Tara,** which basically reworked The Prisoner Of Zenda. Why this serial has attracted so much derision from fans over the years completely escapes me as to my mind it is a jolly good yarn. Many of the Hinchcliffe-produced stories were reworkings but they did not attract such negative criticism for being so. Peter Jeffrey made an excellent villain as Count Grendel, but some of the other cast were less than inspiring. Mary Tamm once again lacked conviction and Neville Jason as Prince Reynart was somewhat wet. Despite this I found the story to be extremely entertaining.

The search for The Key To Time ended with the six-part story **The Armageddon Factor.** Despite its length, this tale maintained this viewer's interest thanks to its varying locations over the course of its run from Atrios to Zeos to the Shadow's lair, plus its strong array of characters from John Woodvine's stern Marshal to Davyd Harrie's humorous Shapp and William Squire's sinister Shadow. The ideas in the story, such as time loops, also appealed and overall the season was well concluded with the Doctor's confrontation with the Black Guardian and his decision to scatter the Key To Time throughout the Universe.

Throughout the season's twenty-six episodes, Tom Baker sparkled, albeit with less drama and more humour than we had previously been served up with, but not as far over the top as the next year would provide. For someone who had been playing the rôle for five years, he still displayed enormous freshness and by changing his approach did not allow the Doctor to become stilted or dull.

From the above I think you will have gathered that I heartily approved of the Key To Time season, in my opinion Graham Williams' worthiest contribution to the **DOCTOR WHO** mythos during his three year tenure as producer. If such a thing as 'Desert Island **WHO**' existed, Season Sixteen would certainly be among eight **DOCTOR WHO** seasons that I would choose to take with me. And why not ?

SEASON 17 (1979/80)

by Martin Wiggins

DOUGLAS ADAMS once said that he was asked to take over from Anthony Read as script editor of DOCTOR WHO because he suggested 'wild ideas'; and ideas was what Season 17 had in plenty.

Take 'Nightmare of Eden', for example. It begins with the traditional science fiction notion of hyper-space travel: the idea that a spaceship would make most of its journey by jumping into a different kind of space, allowing it to travel at vastly accelerated speed. It had been seen on **DOCTOR WHO** most recently in **The Stones of Blood,** and stretched back beyond that as far as **Frontier in Space:** regular viewers were well at home with the concept. But in the hands of Douglas Adams and Bob Baker, it gets a new twist.

All too often, our imagined futures lack many of the basic principles of everyday life as we know it: they are unreal worlds, not just in that they have been created as science fiction, but in that people live nothing that we can recognise as a normal life. But in **Nightmare of Eden,** those principles are there: there is a strong sense of the mundane in the set-up of the passenger liner, the knuckle-headed customs officers, and so on - we've seen it all before. But this isn't just ordinariness to set off the extraordinary events that take place in orbit around Azure (though it serves that function too); it is also an ordinariness that catalyses the extraordinary into existence.

Because we associate scientific advance with efficiency, one fact of everyday life that our science fiction often lacks is accidents: when writers conceive of some new device, they usually think of what it can do, but not of how it could go wrong - and if they do, the accident usually has apocalyptic overtones. Adams and Baker start from the principle that things do go wrong, and that it isn't the end of the world when they do. They begin their story with a traffic accident in space: they ask what would happen if something got in the way of a spaceship coming out of hyper-space. We recognise the reality-principle involved, we recognise the science fiction cliché, and we recognise the resultant image - as was pointed out at the time, it is ripped off from the film Airport '75. But despite these three recognitions, their juxtaposition presents us with something new in science fiction.

This is often the way with the concepts of Season 17: they are born out of their interaction of science fiction with everyday reality. **City of Death** works the opposite way to **Nightmare of Eden:** instead of showing everyday life governing a world of science fiction, it shows science fiction governing the world of everyday life. Instead of producing a scenario we can recognise from a film, it begins with one: the French art theft plot, complete with private detective, owes a lot to the Audrey Hepburn film How To Steal A Million (1966) - the infra-red beams protecting the painting are a dead giveaway. But it's not really a story about stealing the Mona Lisa - indeed, Scaroth never actually sells the paintings, a minor hole in the plot. The theft, like the whole of human existence, is a product of a science fiction idea - an alien, splintered through time by an explosion, trying to reunite himself and undo all his handiwork. The logistics of that idea are never explained: it's not clear why the explosion should split Scaroth into a number of little Scaroths scattered through the future rather than a number of lifeless pieces scattered across the landscape, nor how those separate identities communicate with each other across time. Adams reminds us of the latter point by making the Doctor ask about it in episode three: he doesn't get an answer and neither do we. Perhaps that's appropriate: in the story, humanity cannot see that all its achievements are to serve the Jagaroth's ends, and though we the audience can see more, there are things at the root of the plot that we too can't understand.

City of Death is the only Season 17 serial in which the science fiction idea isn't properly explained; and it was the only Season 17 serial to be generally successful with the fans. That becomes suggestive when we compare it with **The Creature from the Pit.** Terry Walsh has talked about how he and Myra Frances could never keep a straight face in the story because her lines were so bad: "We call it...the pit", and so on. It's a case where the dialogue (like the title) calls attention to a recurrent image in **DOCTOR WHO** and in science fiction in general: the terrible monster in the tunnels. In other words, the situation looks corny; and the story moves, like **City of Death,** back behind this to show more than meets the eye. But whereas its narrative line resembles that of **City of Death,** its logical flow is more like the opening of **Nightmare of Eden** that I analysed above: we find that the scenario of a creature in the pit is born out of the science fiction cliché of narrowly, schematically characterised planets (Chloris with its abundance of foliage, Tythonus with its abundance of metal) interacting with the everyday principles of economics (the conflict between international trade and the maintenance of local monopolies). Whereas in **City of Death** we follow a situation back to an unexpected foundation, in **Creature from the Pit** we learn to understand its origin.

Although Douglas Adams was - in haste - the author of **City of Death** and only contributed as script editor to **The Creature from the Pit,** the latter story is in fact more characteristic of what he sought to do with **DOCTOR WHO.** Adams described his intentions five years later: "My aim was to create apparently bizarre situations, and then pursue the logic of it so much that they actually became real. You'd have somebody behaving in an interesting and apparently outrageous way. You think - at first - that it's funny, then you realise that they mean it and it's actually for real, which then begins to make it more gripping and more terrifying." (A recent analogue might be **The Happiness Patrol.**) It's a technique that depends on the audience doing a double-take, which is why **Creature from the Pit** insists on its own (apparent) corn: the audience was to settle into a cosy, standard **DOCTOR WHO** situation, then pull back to see how that situation came into being out of a recognisable normality. The danger was that the audience would see only the corn, and that seems to be what happened with the fans. **City of Death** scored because the corny situation wasn't in the science fiction genre: it had no necessary relation with the science fiction concept that lay behind (which is why we only **see** its provenance, not **understand** it), so it didn't have to be science fiction itself; and corn imported from a romantic crime thriller was less objectionable to fans of the programme than corn which hit the conventions of **DOCTOR WHO** itself at their weak point.

So was Season 17 a sophisticated piece of drama that fandom was too cussed and not playful enough to appreciate ? Well, no; but it might have been. Adams was trying to put into practice a very complex and original approach to popular series drama; and in the collaborative world of television, that meant keeping a tight control on all the other creative contributors to a series. That control didn't happen: we can see from the Terry Walsh/Myra Frances story that one cast at least didn't know what was going on and treated the story as the hackneyed exercise it seemed.

Periodically artistic control in production proves to be weak. A case in point is **Destiny of the Daleks.** The script starts out like a ghost story: it's set on a spooky planet at night; there's talk of the living dead; and Romana is stalked by a mysterious white figure - it's easy to see why she's starting to get hysterical in episode two. This is an important part of the serial's ongoing frame of reference. It has a recurrent motif of the dead waking up: Tyssan (the said mysterious white figure) escaped the Daleks because he was "left for dead", and Romana simulates death for the same purpose; two of the Movellans, Agella and Lan, survive being 'killed'; and then there's Davros. The entire first half of the story winds out from the horror concept of zombies that's set up in episode one, working through the different ways of being undead. That's the script, anyway: beyond Adam's 'zombie' dialogue (now immortalised in The Oxford Book Of Death), there's not much left in the transmitted version, because the director obviously had no idea of the effect he was being asked to create: episode one was filmed in daylight (not even day-for-night), and Tyssan doesn't look in the least frightening. The story picks up in the second half, dealing with the Dalek-Movellan impasse and the difference between fallible, illogical man and perfect, predictable machine; but the director has imposed a stylistic uniformity, and so lost us a rich contrast between superstition and space opera, and the thread leading from one to the other - from walking dead to robots. As a result, the first half of **Destiny of the Daleks,** the key episodes that started the season, fell flat.

Problems mounted as the run progressed. Besides the director walking out, there is some evidence that **Nightmare of Eden** had to be rushed through the studio, losing bits of script as it went - material that is preserved in Terrance Dicks' novelette. The hectic pace was obviously off-putting for the actors, and meant that sequences which should have been reshot were left in the transmitted version: most notorious is the moment when Tom Baker, attacked by Mandrels, shouts, "Oh, my arms! Oh, my legs! Oh, my everything!"; and at one point in episode four, the character of Fisk even addresses Tryst "Fisk"! The next story, **The Horns of Nimon,** had its budget cut in the course of production, and had to lose parts of the plot: sequences involving night filming were cut and padding inserted in their place, and the costume department never got the chance to make the Nimon's head, which was to be seen when it took off its bull mask. (Yes, it was **supposed** to look like a mask because that is what it was supposed to be!) Finally, **Shada** was strike-bound and abandoned.

Ultimately, Season 17 was an experiment that failed: money and control were neither sufficient, and stories were increasingly mutilated as the production of the season went on; so far as the evidence suggests, only **The Creature from the Pit** and **City of Death,** the first two that were made, came out more or less as envisaged. In other words, it wasn't that there was anything wrong with the ideas: conditions weren't right, that was all. At a time when directors and actors, from Tom Baker downwards, were being given their head, a more straightforward approach would have given them securer bearings.

And for the fans, it was all too easy to cast it off as nothing more than a send-up. The news that Adams had commissioned scripts (all abortive) from John Lloyd, Alastair Beaton and Richard Stilgoe, each one involved in radio comedy, gave fuel to the fears that **DOCTOR WHO** was being spoofed; but since radio comedy was Adams's own background, it was probably no more than the old boy network in operation. What is less well-known, but much more suggestive, is that he also asked Tom Stoppard...

SEASON 18 (1980/81)

by Peter Anghelides

I REMEMBER when I first heard that Tom Baker was leaving DOCTOR WHO. I was in Blackpool at the DWAS Dundee Local Group convention, ScotDoc, and we were watching 'Full Circle'. For me, it was the end of an era. I'd always been a viewer of the show, and avid since the arrival of colour. But Tom Baker's Doctor had captured my imagination. Now I was aware that I was watching his final season.

It must have been true for many. This is the season for which I and many of my DWAS friends first had access to a domestic video recorder. We could watch the show as often as we liked, or at least as often as our parents and pockets allowed (3 hour tapes cost £10.99 eight years ago). Organised **DOCTOR WHO** fans were moving from that early enthusiasm to the more overt criticism that marks the show's following today, encapsulated for many by John Peel's throwaway comment in the review page of TARDIS about "Malcolm Terris' underpants peaking through a tear in his costume". It was a time when Stephen Payne edited TARDIS, and not Starburst. It was a time when there was no DWB.

And of course, it was a time when John Nathan-Turner first came onto the scene, producing what I think is one of the very best **DOCTOR WHO** seasons. "It is particularly gratifying that a long-running programme can gain more air time," he announced of the 28-week season. The season ran over half the year, not just a quarter, and Saturday was a magic time again. Even John Peel called **The Keeper of Traken** "a virtually flawless show".

In comparison with the immediately previous seasons, Season 18 seemed richer and more varied. The regular production team had been shaken up, particularly with the introduction of script editor Christopher Bidmead. The regular cast changed completely - new Doctor, three new companions in (Adric, Nyssa, Tegan) and two out (Romana, K9) - plus the reintroduction of the Master in a sadistic new persona.

There was a fannish interest in continuity amid this change, most emphatically demonstrated in Andrew Smith's investigatory script for **Full Circle.** In counterpoint to this, longstanding items of continuity changed - the theme music and time tunnel opening were radically reworked, along with the TARDIS exoshell. The extravagance of Tom Baker's most recent appearance was toned down, and his costume - at one stage almost completely replaced - became the burgandy shadow which emphasised the most familiar items of long coat, floppy hat and trailing scarf.

And there was variety in the stories. The length of the season allowed for experimentation. **Warriors' Gate** was rather too much hard work for some, not least the average viewer. **Meglos** was an amusing romp, though backgrounded the extra cast rather too much in its exploitation of an astonishing and chilling performance of Meglos by Tom Baker. The season opener, **The Leisure Hive,** offered an allegory for our times in a filmic and musically-illustrated murder mystery which became a study in powerplay on a hostile planet. **State of Decay** took the Baker Gothic to another stage, recalling for example **The Brain of Morbius. The Keeper of Traken** indicated the direction the series could more positively be moving in its study of a class society in crisis. And **Logopolis** was a wallow in the programme's history, while at the same time setting new standards for continuity, regenerations, and the programme itself.

Not incidentally, each show had its additional stars and highpoints to list - be it Jacqueline Hill in **Meglos** and Emrys James in **State of Decay,** or the haunting white void of **Warriors' Gate** and the half-familiar other-worldliness of **Full Circle.** But the star of the season was the season itself, and it coincided with a highpoint in fandom. Which is why I remember it with such affection and nostalgia.

SEASON 19 (1982)

by Paul Cornell

IT WASN'T THE END. When Peter Davison sat up and grinned, there was a tremendous sense of something new beginning. Chris Bidmead had the show in his pocket after one season, creating a technological fable that delighted the watchers as much as the producer. John Nathan-Turner was at his height, had cast the Doctor perfectly, had given his staff room to work. In Season 19 it all came together.

There hadn't been any moral bite to **DOCTOR WHO** for years. The Williams era had presented each story as something trivial; a confection for the young. The change came in Season Eighteeen when Baker threw the Decider's scrolls around. Davison was to present us with a series of moral standoffs which he would generally lose, culminating in his final heroic sacrifice. This was the caring Doctor, the one who wouldn't let anything stop him, but was always foiled. Frankly, he was beautiful.

Four out of seven isn't bad when the four great stories are **Kinda, Black Orchid, Castrovalva** and, in some ways, **Earthshock.** Even if **Four to Doomsday** was an odd clanger of a tale, and **Timeflight** a hideous galloping monstrosity, they still had a sense of unity and tyle. We came to love the characters and follow their travels closely thanks to the careful script-editing where each story blended nto the next. There hadn't been the same sense of **WHO** as both radition and new excitement since Season Five. The twice a week placing was very high-profile, the old ironingboard slot where Blakes Seven had been. There was the soap opera element of "What would happen now ?" and a series of modern gimmicks (such as concorde) and changes to the structure of the show (particularly the TARDIS) hat were pure Troughton.

Castrovalva really turned me on to **WHO** as a new experience and prompted me to join organised Fandom. The story was full of good cience, lovely images, and solid characterisation. If the youngsters didn't understand the physics they could at least grasp the story, omething that wasn't always true in later seasons. It's a story about 'newness', about experience and the right to innocence. One of the most attractive things about the Bidmead era is that science s enshrined, put alongside the arts as something wonderful. The Doctor is delighted with his new body, and dismayed that he can't est without encountering evil. Watching him learning from a child he basics of his life, and then becoming the Doctor proper with Where's Adric ?" is a magical moment, as is his discovery of the cricket room in the TARDIS. "You created us, man of evil, but we are free!". My God, there's dialogue for you! If you're looking for he magic of **WHO,** here it is. As Davison said on his final assumption of the complete image, "I think it's absolutely splendid."

Four to Doomsday might have actually worked for Troughton, but t was basically too dated a story to stand up these days. It really ounds like one of John Wiles' discarded plot ideas. Adric is particularly irritating, Davison isn't as sure of the part as he'd be by the time **Castrovalva** was filmed, and the whole thing is really ather boring.

Kinda was one hell of a story, the height of the whole series in some ways. Intelligent, poetic, dramatic, and the fans hate it because they can't see beyond one duff special effect. Bailey was actually using **WHO** as the best vehicle for his ideas, not treating the series as a relaxing diversion. There are some astonishing performances and the best dialogue of the season. "With measuring and everything!" In many ways, it's a parody of a Troughton 'base under seige' story with the postmodern twist being that the base is only under seige from the fears of those within. Here we see one of Davison's greatest strengths; the ability to relate and interact with aliens on a friendly basis. Respect, in short. He's even able to take a back seat when Mary Morris tells him off for being male. Gender in this story is upfront, particularly in an amazing display of subtle sexuality from Janet Fielding. She does more with a single undone button than most could manage with the most blatant images. Magic moments: Davison's scientific confusion over Adric's coin trick; "An apple a day..."; the discreet romance with Nerys Hughes. It was a lovely story, something to keep safe for the future, and nobody will ever fully get the point.

The Visitation seems a mite obvious to me, all the clichés exposed for us to see: the aliens; the historical paradox; the villagers; the stereotypical rogue with a heart of gold, all treated with Eric Saward's usual shallowness. However, it was about time that such a 'traditional' story was aired, and at least it held together plotwise, unlike his later outings. By this time it was becoming clear that, scriptwise, Nyssa wasn't holding her own with the other characters. Bidmead's high ideas of a party of scientific adventurers explaining the plot to Tegan were beginning to bend under the weight of storytelling. And I thought the android was a hideous example of bad taste.

Black Orchid is a little gem, not exactly a 'historical', because history isn't the issue, but a pair of episodes where we see the characters being themselves, another throwback to the black and white days where the plots were so long and relaxed that you got to know the people. A bold experiment, and something I'd like to see repeated in these fast-forward seasons. Terence Dudley is much more at home; the Doctor gets to play cricket (thus removing the motif from the "I'm Mel, a computer programmer" league), and there aren't really any evil menaces at work at all. Wonderful! Two Sarahs is quite a nice idea too, especially since she showed that she could have fun and giggle and be very cute and English.

Earthshock was what really revitalised the series; a daring redesigning of the Cybermen and the death of a companion. It happened at just the right time, when the previous stories had established the format. Unfortunately, the momentum was lost immediately after it. **Earthshock** can hardly be called a classic (there aren't any lines that send shivers up your spine) but it's a nice, basic adventure, unmarred by gobbledeegook. Some things irritate though: Beryl Reid horribly miscast, and knowing it (she acted her socks off in Smiley's People but here she's, frankly, awful); time travel is possible when you've got an alien computer hooked in to your controls, and when the plot's trying to get back to dinosaur bones and pacifist characters shooting up Cybermen all over the place. Apart from that, it was okay.

Timeflight...what can I say ? A quiet, reflective little story would have been apt, but instead we get a panto involving some of the most ridiculous concepts, costumes and dialogue imaginable. The only question that need be asked about this story is: Why the disguise ? The rest is silence. By now, of course, Saward had taken the helm, and, as influenced as ever by his script-editor, John Nathan-Turner was beginning his plunge towards the depths of **Resurrection of the Daleks** and **Attack of the Cybermen.** It was the end of a beautiful beginning, a time of nostalgia for me, the season I became a fan. For all these reasons, and for **Kinda** and **Castrovalva,** Season Nineteen is my second favourite season.

SEASON 20 (1983)

by Andrew Evans

SEASON TWENTY was the last time DOCTOR WHO consciously celebrated its anniversary. We were promised a special anniversary story - the much-publicised 'The Five Doctors' - but unlike 'Silver Nemesis', the twentififth anniversary story, this was to be in addition to rather than to form a part of the normal season's offerings.

The season itself, it was announced, would mark the occasion by featuring "someone or something from the Doctor's past in every story". In 1983 there was certainly plenty for **DOCTOR WHO** fans to look forward to. Speculation was rife as to which old monsters and characters would be returning to the series. As it turned out, John Nathan-Turner's promise turned out not to be so unique after all. The next two seasons were to adopt a similar theme, with Daleks, Cybermen, Sea Devils and Sontarans popping up in almost every other story. But what of Season Twenty ? Did it fulfil its promise, or did it fall somewhat short of expectations ?

As it began to unfold, it soon became clear that the season was not to be what a lot of people had expected. In three of the stories the returning foe was the same (the Black Guardian trilogy). Two other stories featured foes from the Doctor's very recent past. In **The King's Demons** the Master reappeared, as he had done in the last two seasons, and **Snakedance** featured the Mara again who had made their debut in **Kinda** the season before (the first time a 'new' enemy has returned the following season since **The Sontaran Experiment.** Although **Kinda** had proved to be a popular story amongst many fans, the Mara themselves rather lacked the degree of impact which some of the Doctor's more tangible foes have had.

No Daleks or Sontarans in this season. In fact the final story which was originally intended to feature the Daleks was cancelled because of a **Shada**-style strike which meant that the season ended prematurely with **The King's Demons** (which was very nearly affected as well). However the loss of the story - although it resurfaced the following season as **Resurrection of the Daleks** - cast a cloud over the rest of the season. The disappointment felt by fans led to disappointment with the season as a whole, just like the similarly ill-fated Season Seventeen. Think how much better-remembered that season would be had it ended with **Shada** instead of **The Horns of Nimon!** Never mind, we still had **The Five Doctors** to look forward to with the Cybermen and Daleks, whose appearance in anniversary year would be confined to a five-minute cameo part.

The season opened with **Arc of Infinity,** an intriguing concept - a gateway between the dimensions of matter and anti-matter - which unfortunately was never fully exploited or properly explained. Presumably it worked in a similar fashion to the black hole which performed the same function in **The Three Doctors** ? This was not the only thing these two stories had in common. Omega, having first appeared in the first story of Season Ten at the end in which he seemed to have turned into a supernova, comes back in this, the first story of Season Twenty. Even at the end of this story it's not clear whether he's really been destroyed or not. Perhaps he'll be back again in the first story of Season Thirty. That's the trouble with anti-matter, you can never be sure... Omega himself seemed to lack the same feeling of power and menace that Stephen Thorne's original portrayal managed to convey, particularly when transformed into Peter Davison running around Amsterdam in a boiler suit with rice crispies erupting all over his face. There's always the risk with bringing back old monsters of denigrating one's memories of the originals, as was painfully brought home with the handling of the Silurians and the Sea Devils in **Warriors of the Deep.** What we did see, however, was a different, more human side of Omega's character - for example, in the scene with the little boy by the barrel organ - and one couldn't help feeling some sympathy for his predicament. All Omega wanted to do, after all, was survive in our universe which he couldn't do without destroying it. Instead he had to be destroyed himself. The setting in Amsterdam seemed to be for no better reason than that's where the production team decided it would like a holiday that year. The only justification for it in the script was a rather tedious reference to the fact that Amsterdam was below sea-level and therefore the water pressure in the pipes would be high enough for Omega's matter converter. One got the feeling that the script had been written to fit in with the location rather than the other way round! The script also borrowed from other past stories as well, in particular **The Deadly Assassin.** This is the third time that Gallifrey has been invaded with the assistance of a renegade Time Lord - and in **The Five Doctors** Borusa himself turns renegade! Doesn't exactly say much for plot originality, does it ? Particularly when we keep hearing how one of the programme's strengths is its infinite capacity for variety. (Perhaps that's why it's now become a variety show ?).

Of the two Mara stories, **Snakedance** is undoubtedly my favourite. I thought **Kinda** was very imaginative but what annoyed me about it was the fact that the big mystery in episode one surrounding the missing crewmembers was never really explained. **Snakedance** developed the concept of the Mara further in a much tighter script with strong characters which produced some excellent acting performances. It was Tegan's mind in which the Mara had remained dormant which provided the link between the two stories. Ironically it was in this sequel that we discovered the origins of the Mara and found out about their history and culture.

Mawdryn Undead was the first story in the Black Guardian trilogy and introduced Turlough, recruited by the Black Guardian to kill the Doctor. Changes in the regular line-up were not infrequent at this time with Nyssa leaving in the following story, **Terminus.** Certainly this was a novel way of introducing a new companion. However, after **Enlightenment,** the last story in the trilogy, Turlough's character was sadly neglected. He is virtually redundant in **The King's Demons** and **The Five Doctors.** Even in **Terminus** he is left wandering around tunnels with Tegan for nearly two episodes. Of the three stories **Mawdryn Undead** was definitely the best, due in no small part to the fact that it marked the return to the programme after eight years of Nicholas Courtney as the Brigadier. What was rather difficult to swallow, however, was that he is now teaching mathematics in a boy's public school! Not exactly what one would have predicted for the former UNIT commander. It would have made more sense if he had turned up in a military academy. At least his character was somewhat redeemed by his reunion with UNIT in **The Five Doctors.** And in **Mawdryn Undead** his character was an integral part of the plot rather than incidental to it. This story also included the by now perennial 'flashback' sequence, ironically the nearest we got to seeing any classic repeats that year! The biggest mystery surrounding the season was over which "someone or something" would be returning in **Terminus.** One rumour mentioned the Ice Warriors, another was that Liza Goddard's part had originally been written for Leela. As it turned out, Steve Gallagher's script had simply been amended to accommodate the continuing Black Guardian saga. After a very promising opening episode, the story badly begun to lose its way. It made the rather mundane revelation that the universe had been created by a Gothic hospital discharging a defective fuel tank and gave us a practical demonstration of the Government's latest guidelines on how to build a nuclear fall-out shelter! The characters' names were all inspired by Nordic mythology. The Garm is the Nordic equivalent of Cerberus, the dog which guards the gates to Hell, but it was never explained where the **Hell** he came from! Perhaps the saddest indictment of this story is that it is best remembered for Nyssa's farewell striptease in episode two.

Enlightenment used the surreal but by no means original idea of ships sailing through space. What I could never understand was how, in episode three, when Wrack decides to hold a party on board her ship, all the other masters of sail were able to attend without catching up with her in the race. It made complete nonsense of the whole thing. For me the most memorable scene was the much-awaited confrontation between the Black and White Guardians. For Turlough, Enlightenment was not the diamond but the choice, between the Black Guardian's evil and the Doctor's good.

The King's Demons wrapped up the season which, like **The Horns of Nimon,** it was never intended to do. It was the season's two-part historical story, a jolly medieval romp involving the Master's attempt to deprive the world of Magna Carta. It also provided a vehicle for introducing Kamelion which seemed like a good idea at the time but didn't prove to be very practical and so he wasn't seen again until he was written out in **Planet of Fire** a season later. The final scene had to be rewritten to provide the lead into **The Five Doctors.**

And so to the anniversary special. As it approached, speculation again mounted as to which former Doctors and companions would be returning as each month CT (and the fledgeling DWB) would announce new additions to the cast list of who would be "recreating their rôles" for the occasion. The biggest disappointment for me was the absence from the list of my favourite Doctor, Tom Baker, which perhaps was just as well in the end. At least we got to see some of **Shada** instead, which was actually one of the best bits! And I couldn't help feeling that had he appeared he would have totally dominated the proceedings and overshadowed all the other performances. As it was, there were so many guest stars that there was barely room as well for a plot. Nevertheless Terrance Dicks did manage to come up with a story which was thoroughly entertaining and which also paid tribute to some of the Doctor's classic adventures, including **The Three Doctors** and **Carnival of Monsters** amongst others. It was a celebration of everything that is great about **DOCTOR WHO.** The only real flaw was that if Borusa could have teleported himself straight to the Dark Tower, why didn't he do that in the first place instead of going to all the trouble of kidnapping the Doctors ? Perhaps he had to get them there first before he could get there himself ? But then with so much nostalgia, who really cares ?

1983 was a year of celebration. The programme was still getting respectable ratings and, more importantly, was still being taken seriously by the BBC. **The Five Doctors** also saw the first Radio Times cover for **DOCTOR WHO** in ten years and John Nathan-Turner was still relatively popular with the fans. There was even talk of another documentary (as there has been every year since!). One wonders, though, whether the programme's anniversary is ever likely to be acknowledged to quite the same extent again...

SEASON 21 (1984)

by Gary Russell

THE ROOM was dark and dank. Musty smells and layers of dust greeted his nostrils as he entered. With a thought, the lights flicked on, low and yellow, so as not to age the parchments thereabouts. Idly he flicked the dust off the nearest scroll of history and turned as the stooping Co-ordinator crept in, his gait revealing his awe.

"It's all on visual nowadays of course, certainly his most recent...er...diversions won't be on hard copy." The little old man coughed gently, as if discussing such "diversions" was of the highest embarrassment.

"Thank you," said his 'customer'. "You may go about your duties. I know how to operate the Matrix."

"But surely you need The Keeper..." The Co-ordinator stopped as the other swung round, a gleam of almost maniacal hysteria in his eyes.

"We...I need absolutely no one and nothing except quiet and solitude. I have work to do and a case to prepare. Which are the easiest to view today ?"

With a courteous nod, the Co-ordinator pointed at a set of switches on a nearby console. "The sequence of 'diversions' that led up to his most recent regeneration are immediately available. All are open to the Court, of course, but I thought you might prefer those."

The Valeyard thanked the Co-ordinator curtly and pointed, meaningfully, at the door. After the old Gallifreyan had departed, quietly pulling the door to, The Valeyard allowed himself the tightest of grins. Revenge would be so very sweet, and here was more evidence to obtain it!

The first recording he watched involved the Doctor in a battle against an apparently savage reptilian race called, colloquially, Silurians. The Valeyard noted with irony that these reptile creatures had a secondary off-shoot race known by the even sillier title - Sea Devils. For reportedly cousins, these two races bore - apart from inherant similarities in blood temperature, skin texture and the like - no similar features whatsoever. Indeed, The Valeyard remembered the Doctor's earlier encounters with both races. The ones called Silurians were somehow astonishingly different. For one thing, in the earlier 'diversion' the reptiles' third eye was a weapon of fearsome power, capable of melting through solid rock, performing psychokenetic feats or even boiling a human's blood in a matter of seconds thus killing them. These 'new' Silurians, however, seemed to have no such facilities - the third eye merely glowing as each creature spoke. Clearly these Silurians, having been based underwater, were yet another off-shoot of the originals found in Derbyshire. The Valeyard noted that no gender-differential was obvious, so maybe these non-lethal Silurians were, for the sake of argument, a reptilian female equivalent and the aggressive killers were males. The Valeyard noted from the humans the Doctor was involved with during this particular 'diversion' that whilst the females were not at all pacifistic, the males showed a greater degree of thoughtless violence toward not just the invaders, but each other. The Valeyard was also astonished at the seeming inability of the leaders of the humans to do anything in haste - considering the plight they found themselves in, they did very little to resolve it. Consequently, The Valeyard noted, the Doctor's propensity for getting his companions into dire situations and causing the deaths of almost everyone he came across was at the fore of this 'diversion'. He concluded that he'd seen the Doctor in much better situations than this, with far more interesting enemies, both human and 'alien', especially his previous encounters with the Silurians and Sea Devils, but all told he could not find any way to use this evidence against the Doctor.

Speeding the videofilm on, he discovered the Doctor once again on Earth, facing the evil of a creature called the Malus. It struck him as surprising that the Doctor had not met such a creature before, linked as it was to Earth's history. Indeed, having met the Jagaroth (responsible for life on Earth), the Fendahl (who put evil into the race's morality), and the Daemons (who shaped destiny), it seemed quite astonishing to find another involvement in the scheme of Earth's course through time. The Valeyard was impressed with the delightful locations of this 'diversion', and thought the Malus was exceptionally ingenious to utilise Mankind's obsession with its violent past to cause disruption (The Valeyard appreciated disruption!), but was disappointed at how quickly it all happened. He couldn't understand why the Doctor allied himself with the incredibly tedious boy who'd been transported through time - at first he thought the boy was another statue but realised, when it spoke, that it moved as well. However, The Valeyard approved of the Hampdon woman, her strength of character was what the Doctor needed. Indeed he was disappointed (but not surprised as the Doctor had never shown good sense or taste) when she didn't join him in the TARDIS. Still, bearing in mind the fate which befell some of the Doctor's associates, maybe it wasn't such an error. All in all The Valeyard found himself enjoying the whole event, and despite its speed he was tempted to use it in his prosecution simply as an excuse to review it once again. Then he remembered it contained yet another creature oozing foul coloured juices from its body - and the Supreme Council's irrational ban on such things.

Then came a 'diversion' that positively promised to supply evidence against the Doctor: he transgressed cardinal laws of Gallifrey - not only that but he flaunted them knowingly and gleefully. The planet Frontios was in trouble certainly, and perhaps this 'diversion' showed the Doctor in too good a light - not only was he asked to help but he succeeded and made it a better place to live. Needless to say, the population of Frontios were a bunch well-deserving of survival, especially the young girl Norna. The Valeyard also noted that the Doctor's regular friends, Tegan and Turlough, had a lot to do in this adventure, and although both went through quite a few traumas they seemed unaffected by it by the time the Doctor elected to leave. The Valeyard also observed, annoyingly, that the casualty rate was low, and even the 'aggressive' aliens (and a curiously pleasant-looking race they were too) survived. No, Frontios was not the base for The Valeyard's attack.

Next up, The Valeyard noted, the Doctor was up against his old foes the Daleks. Or more properly, his foe Davros who seemed totally dominant, reducing the Daleks to the rôle of slaves. The Valeyard noted an excessively high casualty rate, but few attributable to the Doctor - more due to their own stupidity. Really, The Valeyard decided, that was the problem with these people - none of them were particularly bright or likeable and he couldn't raise even a groan of annoyance as they were systematically butchered, mostly by the real gem amongst the Universe's criminal element, Lytton. The Valeyard was exceptionally pleased to see him escape and made a mental note to investigate him further. The man who, predictably, turned out to be a Dalek-agent did state clearly that everyone on the Dalek ship was a replicate, so maybe there was another, 'real', Lytton somewhere in the Universe. The Valeyard hoped so. Overall, The Valeyard felt he had reviewed better 'diversions' involving the Daleks, but none perhaps in such a breathtaking way. By the end, especially in a sequence that stirred even The Valeyard's emotions, where the female companion departed, he felt it had been a worthwhile and quite enjoyable watch, full of possibilities for his case, but as none of them were developed nearly enough he decided to move onto the next one.

About ninety standard minutes later he hovered his hand over the erase switch. However, the events on Sarn were of prime importance to the Doctor's future (ie: the casual and abhorrent destruction of his robotic companion Kamelion - totally out of even the Doctor's character - and the arrival of Peri Brown who was to play a large part in his presentation) and meant that the Keeper of the Matrix would consider it very unsatisfactory to lose the events. After watching, however, The Valeyard made a mental note to put the events - along with those set on Skonnos, Logopolis and the station Terminus - as definites for erasure if an opportunity ever arose.

What a startling difference the events on the planets of the Androzani system were. The Valeyard found himself completely breathless by the end. Rich characters abounded. Aggessive, almost violent, sequences abounded. Yes, this was one for the Trial without doubt. The Doctor found himself and his now sole companion Peri caught up with a tremendously unsavoury bunch of gunrunners, disloyal diplomats and vengeful soldiers all up against one startling villain - the disfigured and rather pitiful Sharaz Jek. Immediately Jek joined the likes of Lytton, Scaroth of the Jagaroth and the Celestial Toymaker as one of the most adept and interesting adversaries the Doctor had encountered. The Valeyard found himself so caught up by the events that by the end he had forgotten to make notes for the Trial - it had encompassed his attention so totally that he found he couldn't bear to spoil such pleasure by watching the videofilm again.

After a break, where he viewed the final moments of the Androzani 'diversion' again to see the Doctor's latest regeneration occur, he settled down to view the first adventure of this 'new' Doctor. Over the top, ridiculous clothing, and unbelievable actions for the Doctor raced through his mind, but after a while he began to see the 'real' person under the bravado. Indeed there was a terrifically shrewd mind, full of compassion and righteousness, and however nauseating it was, it was at least 'The Doctor'! As he observed this new persona he could see he would make an interesting opponent in the Courtroom; whereas the previous Doctor might have stood his ground, firm in the belief he was right, this incarnation would no doubt fight and protest and provide a most interesting battle. Realising he had only a few minutes left in this session, he carefully selected the sequences from the 'diversion' that contained this new Doctor and made duplicate copies to study at his leisure. This personality had more to it below the surface; he'd certainly made an impressive debut and The Valeyard decided he could almost like the man!

As he stood up, The Valeyard concluded that it had been an enlightening and invigorating session, full of drama, pathos and interesting people to meet. Next up would be the latest series of 'diversions' leading up to the Trial. As he wandered away, he casually obliterated the new Doctor's première 'diversion'. As a record of the Doctor's 'diversions' it deserved no more - it even made the Sarn 'diversion' seem viewable.

As he left, the lights dimmed and flickered out. Seconds before the Matrix automatically switched off there was a quiet, deep chuckle, and a man in black - a short pointed beard at the base of his almost deathly pale face - stood over the Matrix, flicked a switch and in a crackle of Antron energy vanished into the actual machinery of the Matrix itself.

The trap was set...for the Doctor and The Valeyard...

SEASON 22 (1985)

by Antony Howe

THIS SEASON will always be recalled as the one that made BBC Management cancel DOCTOR WHO and publicly attack the series' production team. Why ?

Peter Haining's Time Traveller's Guide implies that the 'postponement' and sacking of Colin Baker were all whims of a nasty BBC boss acting wickedly and for no good reason. This is just too silly to bother with. The real reason Michael Grade acted was quite apparent.

On Saturday, 5th January 1985 in Britain, the first episode of **Attack of the Cybermen** was screened - a combination of an exciting title and curiosity about the new Doctor drew surprisingly mediocre ratings of 8,910,000. The second episode rated only 7,170,000 - a fall of 20% in a week. **The Two Doctors** fell to 5,960,000 - a drop of **33%** from the start of the season. Millions apparently thought the show was too boring and badly made to watch. Then, due to unusual scenes of cruelty in the show, letters appeared in the press attacking the violence. No BBC Executive doing his job could ignore all this.

A 23rd Season (of 9 hours, 45 minutes screen time) was being prepared for screening in January 1986; scripts were in, directors were planning their filming schedules. Suddenly this whole season was cancelled. Many months later, a shortened, all new Season 23 was filmed, consisting of only 5 hours, 50 minutes actual screen time.

Why was Season 22 such a disaster ? **The Twin Dilemma** had introduced a radical new concept for the series; at its core was a so-called Doctor who violently tried to kill his helpless companion and then terrorised her. "Regeneration trauma" is really related to memory loss - it **cannot** be an excuse for attempted murder! John Nathan-Turner and Eric Saward perverted the Doctor into a simple action-man who was maniacally egotistical, rude, callous, contemptuous, sneering, cowardly, stupid and violent. An alien the Doctor may be, but not a monster. All this poisoned Season 22, turning it into **DOCTOR WHOLIGAN.** While Colin Baker did not think up this concept, his screen expertise as a villain breathed life into this vile Doctor, making many scenes far nastier than the scripted words indicate. Sadly he was totally unconvincing with kind, gentle and sensitive parts - his death-of-Lytton and "Never more a gumblejack"(**The Two Doctors**) speeches were flat and unemotional. Nicola Bryant's Peri was ghastly with Baker; she became his punching bag and instead of fighting back she snivelled and whined her way into becoming the worst female companion ever. As for their costumes, **atrocious** sums it up.

The misuse of continuity was excessive. Old enemies, the Second Doctor and Jamie - all were exploited to buy fan acceptance of the change. Nathan-Turner's era has had more continuity errors and disasters than any other and none more so than in this season. The references to **Tomb of the Cybermen** and **The Tenth Planet** were chaotic and the Cybermen were feeble and stupid. Jamie and the Second Doctor were exploited and misused to make old fans watch from nostalgia. They came from the wrong time stream, Jamie knew about the Time Lords and the Second Doctor was working for them - all impossible **before The War Games!** The Time Lords of **The Two Doctors** were presented as just one of many unual squabbling Galactic races, Dastari despised them for their weakness and the Second Doctor seemed to agree. The pseudo-science of the symbiotic nucleii of a Time Lord was garbage and contradicted over a dozen early stories as well as **Attack of the Cybermen** and **Timelash** - both in the **same** season! The last time we saw Davros he was dying of plague, so how did he get to Necros alive and gain such vast power there ? The Daleks had been defeated by the Movellans, abandoned Skaro and were hiding, but here they were miraculously back on Skaro and able to send an army to grab Davros!

Story by story, Saward's script editing was even worse than usual. **Attack of the Cybermen** (co-written by him) was a feeble rip-off of old Cybermen stories. The plot kept changing with confusing regularity and the Cybermen made implausibly stupid mistakes. Lytton had so much good luck it was miraculous; his knowledge was God-like, he was vicious, offering men to the Cybermen for conversion, he was being paid, and then at the end we were told he was a goodie!? As for the Cryons, they were a nonsense. They could not live on the surface of Telos due to the temperature, so where did they come from ? How could they build the tombs ? How did they survive the Cybermen's attacks ? Why did the Cybermen do nothing to stop the Cryon sabotage ? The Doctor became an unthinking action-man - he did nothing to remove the Cyber base under London or on the moon, and nothing to stop Halley's Comet hitting the Earth (the Cybermen had **already** aimed it). Instead of fixing these difficulties, Saward blew everything up, and used Lytton's death in the same way as Adric's, to avoid writing an ending. The directing was terrible: fight scenes were slow and clumsy; the acting was very poor; Bryant's Peri was worse than ever; Colin Baker was bombastic, aggressive and insensitive - he too obviously enjoyed the scenes where he shot up the Cybermen. The Doctor should **never enjoy being violent.**

Vengeance on Varos had some initially interesting ideas but they were not developed and it quickly degenerated (eg: turning Peri into a bird was ridiculous!). The direction was poor and in over-exploiting violence, the story failed as a social criticism of 'video nasties' - it itself was a video nasty! Ripping-off the film 1984, this world was very unpleasant, the sets were drab and the characters were all back-stabbing creeps - even the personable Governor was really a vicious, ruthless, greedy tyrant. The new alien, Sil, was absurdly helpless and was amazingly stupid, so how did he become so powerful ? **Doctor Wholigan** was at home here: he sneered at men dying in a vat of acid; organised an ambush which killed many people; and did nothing at the end to help anyone, leaving the video and torture equipment intact and not helping to free the people from the Governor's tyranny.

The Two Doctors was a monumental bore. Chasings up and down corridors is now usual, but why waste money going to Seville just to run up and down alleyways ? There is really stunning scenery in Spain, but we never saw it. The idea of the two Doctors meeting was unbelievable - it was absurd that the Sixth Doctor had no memory of what happened, and how could he possibly be affected by the Androgum conversion of the Second Doctor ? And why did the Sontarans need to learn about time travel when they could safely do this hundreds of years before ? Vastly worse was the vicious nature of the story. The gore and violence in this story were all avoidable, it added nothing and could have been cut by a ten minute rewrite. Shockeye did not have to kill and eat a blind helpless old woman, or copy the TV series V and eat a rat; Chessene did not need to lap up blood; Oscar did not need to be stabbed to death in the stomach; the Sontarans did not need to be burnt with acid, mutilated and blown up - all lovingly shown on screen! Worst of all was the murder of Shockeye. **Doctor Wholigan** escaped, but instead of getting away he stopped, ambushed, half-suffocated, disarmed and then murdered Shockeye, sneering over his body. This was the death of **DOCTOR WHO.** Colin Baker should have refused to film it, but the man who said he wanted more violence and who wanted to "tear the heads off the Daleks and eat the green thing inside" did not care. Neither he, nor the production team, were capable of understanding the Doctor's character.

Mark of the Rani was probably the best of this ghastly season. The location filming and period setting plus some decent performances lifted this story. But why the unnecessary and tedious inclusion of Anthony Ainley's melodrama Master ? Hadn't he been burned to a cinder last time we saw him ? The Rani was far better, despite some over-acting and playing for laughs. But not enough was explained: who was she; how could an exile control a planet and have such a wondrous TARDIS ? The plot was a muddle: Why did she let the Master take her vital samples so easily; how could people be turned into trees (they looked like rejects from a Dad's Army camouflage kit!); how could a 'tree' save Peri ? This was science (ha, ha, ha) fiction). Why did the Doctor do virtuall nothing to stop history being changed ? He openly used a futuristi time-tracking device, he told the locals that the inventors wil change history, he left his time sensor in the pit and left the Rani' minefield intact. He didn't care. He **should** have.

Timelash was the cheapest production. The tinsel sets wer tawdry and the 'seatbelts' on the TARDIS console were laughable The actors made little effort - Herbert was so bad I thought h must be Adric's elder brother, and why was Paul Darrow allowed t ham it up so outrageously ? The squeeky-voiced, blue-faced androi was painful. The ugly Jon Pertwee painting was an insult to great Doctor, especially when it was smashed. The plot was childis and yet another alien wanted to marry Peri! The pseudo-science t explain the Borad's plan was trash, as was his magical escape **afte** having been shot by **Doctor Wholigan** (yes, yet **another** col blooded murder!). The scene of Colin's Doctor threatening the alie - "I am the Lord High President" - was awful. After the feebl Time Lords of **The Two Doctors** this alien should have laughed. A for the Doctor using the TARDIS as a missile deflector - yawn.

Revelation of the Daleks is the vilest story in the series' histor The presentation of The Doctor and Peri as a sqabbling marrie couple; the sexual overtones when the Doctor's watch was broken b Peri; Jobel's sexual slobberings over her; Tasembeker's stabbing o Jobel in the heart with a hypodermic needle; the sick reverenc towards Orcini who was, after all, a murderer, and his skewering o Kara in the chest; Davros' mutilation and the Doctor's subsequen sneering 'joke'; the decaying bodies, the slime, the muck, the eve present atmosphere of sex and death on Necros...the whole thing wa quite obscene. The sets were peculiar, especially Davros' base wit its writhing statues and ruins. The glass Dalek was a gory mystery included for loathsome effect only. The DJ was a daft idea, a rip off of Douglas Adams' style, and Davros' confrontation with Orcin was a pathetic theft from Return Of The Jedi and the idea o processing human flesh for food came from Soylent Green where i was better done.

Season 22 was the most vicious and senseless season of **DOCTOR WHO** ever filmed. Michael Grade did the right thing.

SEASON 23 (1986)

by John Ainsworth

SEASON TWENTY-THREE, 'The Trial of a Time Lord', was one of the most eagerly awaited seasons in the history of DOCTOR WHO. It is also probably the season that has received the most overall criticism.

For those who found John Nathan-Turner's style of production unpalatable, Season Twenty-Three was the quintessence of everything that they despised. "Eighteen months is too long to wait!" went the song, but for some it wasn't worth the wait. **The Trial of a Time Lord** had received a massive build-up that it couldn't possibly hope to live up to. This image was not helped by the fact that the season was presented as one epic length story rather than four interconnected ones, giving the whole thing an unwieldy feel.

A premier at PanoptiCon VII, a script by Robert Holmes and a much vaunted opening effects sequence; **The Mysterious Planet** obviously had a great deal stacked in its favour. Rewatching it now, it is easy to see why **The Mysterious Planet** was not particularly well-received. It collapsed under the overwhelming weight of high hopes and preconceptions. It is certainly not a bad script but (wait for it) it's no classic. Competent would seem to be the most adequate description of the story. Robert Holmes is an undisputed professional, there were no loose ends or missing explanations to the story, which is more than can be said for many other authors' works. Glitz and Dibber were the typical Holmes duo, and were probably the most well-received aspect of the whole story, being comparable to Unstoffe and Garron, Jago and Litefoot and other memorable Holmes creations.

Nicholas Mallett's direction was adequate, but other than that not really worthy of comment. The opening effects sequence was indeed excellent, but thirty seconds later it was over and forgotten. Fans wet themselves at the seemingly horrendous miscasting of yet another L.E. actor; this time Joan Simms. However, like many of her predecessors she proved to be totally capable of turning in a good performance worthy of the script. Aside from Katryca, Glitz and Dibber, the rest of the human population were rather nondescript, Tom Chadbon getting a particularly raw deal. Drathro, however, was particularly impressive, both in appearance and character; his narrow minded and selfish attitude successfully exasperating the audience as well as the Doctor.

Ah yes, the Doctor and Peri. Here we were to find the first and in all probability the **only** major change to the series since the final episode of Season Twenty-Two eighteen months earlier. The credit lies, however, with Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant who later commented that they were playing against the script. Quite rightly recognising what Nathan-Turner and Eric Saward had not, that two people travelling together who argued all the time would not travel together for very long. Baker and Bryant allowed the Doctor and Peri to be friends. Gone was the abrasiveness of the Doctor and gone was Peri's aggravating whining (along with her boob tubes), and in their place we saw that the Doctor and Peri did in fact hold a fondness for each other which had been badly missed in the previous season. The change, however, came too late. The next story was to be Peri's last and the necessities of the script would make it impossible for this character development to continue.

Not a great story, not a bad story, but it achieved its objective in introducing the audience to the concept of the Trial, and also providing information that would take on a new significance towards the season's conclusion. **The Mysterious Planet** can be compared to Arthur Dent in that both are only remarkable for being so unremarkable.

Mindwarp was to be the real casualty of the season. Out of the framework of the Trial the story is quite meaningless. The Doctor's motives throughout the four episodes were never made clear and even Philip Martin is a little unclear as to what was going on as the script had suffered greatly at the hands of Eric Saward. **Mindwarp**'s plot may have been thrown to the wind, but good sets, costume and direction made it interesting if only on a superficial level.

The startling use of the Paintbox process gave Thoros Beta a truly alien look and makes the surface of Vortis look like something out of The Clangers. However, some of the aliens that lived on the planet left a lot to be desired. The Rarrk seemed to be a close relative of a Mire Beast and in danger of falling to bits at any moment, and the midget Terileptil was a mite too obvious. The Mentors were on the whole well handled, though Sil's costume was not as effective as it had been in **Vengeance on Varos,** and why had it changed colour ? Of course the whole story was just a vehicle for his return but like so many popular villains (ala Jaws and James Bond), the second appearance is not as good as the first. Sil had lost his menace and was much more a device for humour. Philip Martin was obviously playing up to the popular image of Sil, but skimped on the finer details of the character that had been present on Varos.

Brian Blessed hammed his plot up wonderfully and the plot hurtled forward at a tremendous rate at the high cost of any kind of decent explanation until we reached the exciting end. We're not quite sure how we get to the end, but it's exciting all the same. Nicola Bryant packs into her last sixty seconds the best acting that we had seen from her so far. Everyone reels in shock as she gets her brains blown out of her bald skull by the enraged Yrcarnos. **Mindwarp** certainly had ending with an impact if nothing else. Poor Ron Jones must have been rather lost with the almost shapeless script, but he certainly gave his best and made more of a mark than had Nicholas Mallett.

With **Terror of the Vervoids** we were back on safer and more familiar territory. This time the story - a murder mystery in space - was far more comprehensible. However, the plot was an intricate one and required all the viewer's attention right from the start. With the overall plot of the Trial to think about as well, this made **Terror of the Vervoids** quite a demanding story.

The plot had obviously been thought through in some considerable detail; almost all the characters, both major and minor, had an important rolê to play. This was a murder-mystery of course, and that means that everybody is a suspect. How many people I wonder were lulled in to believing that Janet was the culprit ?

The Vervoids themselves were a very typical race of **WHO** monsters and had quite a good and believable motivation behind them (ie: humans eat plants, we are plants so let's kill the humans). Their appearance and voice effect was quite good as well. The Mogarians were particularly credible and impressive to look at. The only bad egg amongst the humans seemed to be the Commodore who came across as being rather flat, while the ageing Honor Blackman was fine as the annoying Laskey even if the character was a bit of a cliché.

The only let-down of the story was the end which I found to be a bit too easy. Basically it seemed to boil down to "Let's throw bombs at them". However, this was a minor point and overall **Terror of the Vervoids** is quite definitely the story of Season Twenty-Three that stands as a story in its own right, and as such is the most successful segment.

The Ultimate Foe had been eagerly awaited. The few that hadn't had the information leaked to them by certain irresponsible publications were chewing their fingernails in anticipation of the conclusion of the Trial. The Valeyard and the Inquisitor had, of course, been seen throughout the previous twelve episodes, but it was the former that held the whole concept of the Trial together. Michael Jayston's magnificent performance was a joy to behold, particularly when the plot had been flagging in any of the stories.

Episode one of **The Ultimate Foe** was compelling viewing. Robert Holmes writing again proved that he had a better understanding of the Trial concept than most others (including Eric Saward). It had been eight episodes since the end of **The Mysterious Planet** and since then the Trial had become a little convoluted. Episode thirteen put it back on its tracks, answered all of the questions and geared everything up for the final confrontation: The Valeyard is the Doctor, WOW! The Time Lords moved the Earth and called it Ravalox, DAMN!

Unfortunately as we know Robert Holmes never completed the story. What it would have been like if he had we shall never know. Whether Eric Saward's unused script bears any resemblance to what Holmes would have done is also questionable, and somehow I doubt it.

Considering the time limit that Pip and Jane Baker were given, they did their best. Sadly the philosophy behind the Valeyard is slightly against what Holmes had established. An awful lot of pseudo-science goes flying about and if ever the charge of "pantomime" could be levelled at a John Nathan-Turner episode this is it (ie: the end!).

In all episode fourteen is a bit of a let-down, particularly after the well-written thirteen. Michael Jayston makes the best of it and copes admirably with some horrendous lines like the now legendary "Catharsis of spurious morality"!

Overall, **The Trial of a Time Lord** is a bit of a monster. It is far too long and loses direction somewhat in the middle. Robert Holmes and Michael Jayston must be credited with saving the season, indeed, if Holmes had had far more control it would probably have turned out better than it did. The villain of the piece must be Eric Saward who threw a spanner into the works at the end of the season which was already beset with problems.

On the whole, nowhere near as bad as it is reputed to be, but it could have been better. Give me this rather than Season Seventeen any day.

SEASON 24 (1987)

by Nicholas Briggs

SURELY THE CONTROVERSY regarding DOCTOR WHO's worthiness as a television programme or object of fan worship reached new heights in Season 24. So, what did we have ? Quite an incredible mixture, really.

Perceptions started to reel the moment Sylvester McCoy rounded on the stylish Kate O'Mara. "The Rani!" he exclaimed: but fans up and down the land were asking, "The Doctor ?". However, this wasn't the Doctor, just a rush of post-regenerative energy animating that little figure half buried beneath Colin Baker's costume. Some of us have even speculated that perhaps this was a McCoy rendition of a Baker performance. Make of it what you will.

For my money, we didn't see the real McCoy incarnation until he meets the real Mel. How odd it is that Sylvester McCoy's portrayal should gain that essential believability and charm when matched with a supporting performance that was infamous even before it hit the screen. I'm talking about Bonnie Langford, of course. A consumate professional, a brilliant dancer, a sparkling stage presence and, in television interviews, and by reputation, a really nice person. But, oh, what happened when they asked her to act in **DOCTOR WHO** ? Two things, I think.

Firstly, she inspired in Mr McCoy the creativity to play that recognition scene in **Time and the Rani** so well. A similar and equally moving result is achieved in Mel's departure scene (in **Dragonfire**) which is amazing enough, not only because it marks the exit of an exceptionally irritating character, but because the actual script for that scene was scribbled on paper napkins in rather a hurry.

Secondly, that secret 'acting energy' control dial, which sits undetected somewhere on Ms Langford's body, is turned up past maximum and into the red danger zone. Now we all know what happens when we turn our stereo amplifiers up too high. There's distortion, the neighbours complain, the windows shatter and eventually your speakers and amplifiers will blow up. Bonnie Langford, on the other hand, shows admirable resistance to over-amplification in her acting. Her voice may whine and howl unpleasantly enough for us to whince or clasp our ears; her gesticulation and facial expression may pull her skin agonisingly taut over her boney frame: but she remains unharmed and looks, if anything, invigorated by the experience. I wish I could say the same for the television audience.

There is, however, no doubt in my mind that the portrayal of Mel was **not** 'over the top' or 'ham'. These terms suggest a lack of feeling or true emotional content in Bonnie Langford's acting; and that's doing Ms Langford a grave injustice. She meant every darn word she had to say; it came straight from the heart. The problem is that after exiting said heart, 'it' grew to the sort of monstrous, grotesque proportions that were only ever meant to be contained in vast arenas such as the Albert Hall...certainly not my television set.

Mel was a bizarre inclusion in the **DOCTOR WHO** mythos, which, unfortunately, for me casts a shadow over Season 24. Not such a dark shadow, I might add, though.

The brighter elements abound. The Seventh Doctor himself did, for the most part, an inspiring job of feeling his way around scripts not specifically tailored for him. As well as the two particular scenes I've mentioned, there was ample opportunity for us to find out about the new Doctor.

Pip and Jane Baker's tedious, misquoted proverbs thankfully melted into the background of the character immediately after director Andrew Morgan had finished doing his utmost to save the debut story from mediocrity. The doffing of the straw hat, although seen by some as vaudeville, is a charming, fluid mannerism that fits neatly into the Doctor's personna. It was, for example, a wonderfully developed addition to the "How do you do" sequence in **Paradise Towers.**

We soon got to know that this Doctor can be as resolute and outraged as he is whimsical. He completely loses his temper with Gavrok; bawls in true theatrical bluster, "I'll smash it to pieces!" over the Rani's handiwork; turns the interrogation spotlight on the Chief Caretaker; and gravely speculates Belaz's fate whilst aboard the Nosferatu. His voice slides the scale in scientific fascination and growls determination in low, menacing tones. Integration of this with his uniquely physical approach to the part gave the McCoy Doctor a clarity of impact that was only marred by patchy outbreaks of loose direction and the fact that the season lasted a mere 14 weeks.

There was very little that was patchy or loose about Andrew Morgan's direction, however. The problems for **Time and the Rani** lay firmly in the script department.

Now, I know it's fashionable to criticise Pip and Jane Baker, but sometimes fashion has more substance to it than sensational vindictiveness. Undoubtedly, the Bakers know their craft, but it's the fact that they're hardened old pros that, I believe, leads them to let a little cynicism creep into their scripting. The outrageous and largely incomprehensible scale and complexity of the Rani's plan conjures up an image of hilarity and cigar smoke over the word processor at the Baker's residence: "Ha! They'll love this - an anagram of Holy Grail!!!". Nevertheless, grandiose, psuedo-scientific mumbo-jumbo is forgivable; what really took the edge of the story was the constant repetition of escaping, running away and getting captured. Of course, the Bakers have successfully identified such antics as the staple ingredient of the action-adventure format, but they ladled it out rather indiscriminately with that tired cynicism of theirs. By episode three, Andrew Morgan had been trapped into visual repetition, since he was presented with no really new material. Keff McCulloch seemed to follow suit, restating the same emotional content in his music throughout the final two parts.

Despite all this, and to paraphrase veteran Morris Barry (at PanoptiCon VIII, a few days after the screening of the first episode of Season 24), it all looked wonderful. The Tetraps were a marvellous creation, their underground lair as effectively menacing and creepy as the location work was convincingly desolate and alien. The effects were beautifully crafted, with the show-piece being those terrifying video spheres. As for the acting, Donald Pickering looked a little embarrassed at times, but was essentially noble in the face of the now slightly more melodramatic Rani. Kate O'Mara waded expertly through a dirth of shoddily written dialogue, treating every tarnished syllable as if it were the work of Bard. The notion of her impersonating Mel was potentially disastrous, but this stylish and dedicated professional made it one of the most effective (and hilarious) elements of the story. Worth a mention, as well, is Wanda Ventham as Faroon, who was particularly moving and convincing.

Something to ponder about **Time and the Rani** is the question of whether or not it would have been more effective with the Gothic, test tube bubbling laboratory and Hammer Horror forest Pip and Jane Baker intended. As it stands, in the traditional **DOCTOR WHO** stakes, **Dragonfire** beats **Time and the Rani** by quite a few lengths.

Ian Briggs' script was by no means perfect in its basic plot ideas, but it succeeds over the seasoned Baker offering on moment to moment dramatic content. This, in turn, inspired a flare and energy in Chris Clough's direction (which had disappeared in episode two of **Delta and the Bannermen**) and a wonderfully epic quality in Dominic Glyn's music.

At PanoptiCon IX, Ian Briggs humorously asserted that his storyline and script underwent a number of rewrites simply because neither was any good in the first place. Chris Clough's chuckling at this might possibly speak volumes. At any rate, it was he - and not Ian Briggs - who had pondered (and answered) the question of why anyone would imprison someone (Kane) with the key to his escape (the Dragonfire) on the same planet. Answer that one yourselves!

The production, however, succeeded mainly because of the commanding portrayal of Kane (by Edward Peel), who was, after all, the central motivation for the whole plot. His scenes were given the icily effective final touches by slick use of the camera crane, subtle make-up and chilling incidental music.

I have to say that, as far as camera work goes, my preference is not for Mr Clough's looser, one-shot-per-scene technique. Admittedly, however, it is this very use of the developing, moving shot (rather than close-ups and quick cutting) that gives the golden sovereign scene its dramatic impact. From impressive wide shots of the cryogenic chamber and the less than startlingly imaginative treatment of the café scenes, the impact of the sudden big close-ups of Ace, Kane and the coin (Mel is thankfully in long shot) is really quite stunning. This was Sophie Aldred's first scene to be recorded and it ranks alongside the 'Dorothy' speech for sheer performance energy and emotional impact. The rest of her performance, although certainly effective (and boding well for the future of the series) suffered at times by what looked like the symptons of directorial laxity. I've lost count of the number of times I've heard **DOCTOR WHO** directors talk about how they're an "actor's director", always concentrating on the actor's performance; but there is **always** evidence to the contrary. For the most part, it seems directors cast their actors then find that they've got very little time to do anything except write their camera script. There seems to be a tendency just to let the actors get on with it, which is a shame because, although I wouldn't accuse Chris Clough of wilful neglect, I feel Ace could have done with a little more nurturing.

Glitz, although entertainingly roguish, did tend to look tubby and uncomfortable at times, as did Stubby Kaye in **Delta and the Bannermen**; a story with very little of the dramatic impact of **Dragonfire.**

As for **Delta and the Bannermen,** it was obviously a very enjoyable story to make. The weather was nice and everyone on the production team was pleased to put on their shorts and Hawaiian T-shirts, or simply display their bulging stomachs. The problem is that this 'fun' element, which is probably inherent in the script, translated itself into production terms by creating a rather abbreviated form of **DOCTOR WHO.**

Whether this is the fault of the low episode count of the story, or the largely frivolous and undramatic musical score, it's sometimes difficult to decipher. The pace defies belief at times, but there certainly are some stylishly nasty moments which contrast sharply with the madcap chase elements. The destruction of the flying bus is shockingly abrupt and complimented nicely by Mel's outrage. Gavrok apparently digesting (and gobbling out) raw meat is extremely repulsive. The Bannermen themselves, although supremely laughable on occasions, appear as an awesome threat when systematically destroying Stubby Kaye's camping gear.

Unfortunately, there are elements which distract from the drama. Delta herself is played with such stolidity that you might be forgiven for thinking she had already been killed by Gavrok. Billy doesn't seem in the least bit shocked at seeing a slimey green baby in the arms of the woman he fancies...and this is an interesting point! The relationship between Billy and Delta seems entirely sudden and superficial. It's simply not very believable that Billy would decide to turn himself into a Chimeron (!?) and then zap off to another planet all in the space of a few hours: but of course, this is that fun, fast and furious programme, **DOCTOR WHO,** folks! **Anything** can happen! - and, largely speaking, in **Delta and the Bannermen,** it did. The abbreviated nature of the story seemed mostly affectionate, like a quick note to a friend; no details, just highlights. It's certainly true to say this story had an outrageous style all of its own, but it's a shame that the energetic space opera of episode one didn't ever settle down into something a little more mature.

The other oddball story was, of course, **Paradise Towers.** This luxuriated in a mammoth four episodes, but although it contained much that was enjoyable, or even downright rivetting, it still didn't manage to explain itself very well.

That said, it was full of lovely performances. Sylvester McCoy further established himself, especially in the rule book scene with the guards. Clive Merrison and Richard Briers turned in stirling performances of suppressed hilarity, although Briers' Croagnon was a little hard to swallow. The Krangs were nowhere near as aggravating as they might have been and, of course, Tabby and Tilda were an absolute delight.

The things that really let this story down were Bonnie Langford at full amplification (that dial went into the danger zone), the extremely hasty ending and the lack of explanation in the plot. I mean, what the hell was Croagnon up to ? Superfluous scenes spent running about corridors might have lent their screen time more usefully to some sort of clarification of this point.

However, this was all part of the brave new face of **DOCTOR WHO**...as brave as it could be with the airwaves choked with reactionary babbling about violence on television. There was certainly no return to the flippancy of the Graham Williams era; more the development of a new, more offbeat perspective on the programme.

Season 24 was at its worst when Keff McCulloch tossed inspiration out of the window and switched on the drum machine and orchestral stabs instead; when Bonnie Langford forgot that the real audience was only a couple of feet away from her, and when the directors slackened their grip.

The season was at itrs best in countless places. There was a new visual style in vogue...and I for one found that rather exciting. **Delta and the Bannermen**'s opening scenes were energetically engrossing. **Time and the Rani**'s editing was inspiring in its early passages.

There was also a new, lovable daftness permeating the series. In a way it was personified in Sylvester McCoy himself, although there is undoubtedly more to the Seventh Doctor: but moments such as the "All hail the Great Architect" finger-to-nose salute and the intellectual Iceworld guard were wonderfully anarchic without a trace of cynicism.

It's a shame that the reason for Mel's departure got lost in wranglings about the uncertainty of Ms Langford's future with the show, but Ian Briggs gave his best...albeit on a napkin. To match this, McCoy, Langford and Aldred excelled to give us a closing scene that looked like the beginning of a new era.

Surely...it was.

SEASON 25 (1988/89)

by Gary Levy

APART FROM THE dubiously-timed releases of a couple of videos and an LP - designed, no doubt, with the emphasis on the till receipts rather than as a noble gesture - it was left to an initially energetic production team to pay homage to the BBC's longest-running fictional TV series ever.

However this is not surprising as the BBC barely conceal their contempt for **DOCTOR WHO** these days and obviously decided such an event did not merit 'suitable' recognition, seemingly conveniently forgetting that it is their continuing machiavellian attitude towards the programme that has virtually reduced it to a laughing stock in the eyes of the public. They continue to stubbornly overlook the respect **DOCTOR WHO** commanded from their professional predecessors with their cryptic replies to viewers' concerns for the series; their consistently claustrophobic positioning of the series against top-rated competition; and their almost patronising reinstatement season after season of a producer seemingly 'trapped' in a job he understandably lost interest in seasons ago.

It is against this unpleasant backdrop that John Nathan-Turner and the production team set to work on producing the landmark Twentififth Season, seemingly with a renewed determination to produce a season which would make the sixth floor sit up and take note, and there is no disputing the success of their first effort, **Remembrance of the Daleks,** which restored a credibility to **DOCTOR WHO** that had been notable by its absence since Peter Davison's exit story.

It is hard to define exactly the unique atmosphere inherent in Ben Aaronovitch's debut adventure - particularly the first episode which really did come as a breath of fresh air - but it was one which I'd certainly never experienced before on **DOCTOR WHO** and was pleased to see continue into the rest of the season. If I had to pinpoint it then I would liken it to "a serious Season Twenty-four" in style; comic-strip, but without the slapstick! It is into this mould that Sylvester McCoy and Sophie Aldred seem tailor-made, and it has to be said that together they form one of the most inseparably matched and likeable Doctor/companion teams ever, and long may they continue to do so!

Sylvester McCoy has an almost uncannily unique presence about him, with the ability to change mood at the blink of an eye - he may be clowning around one minute, but the next you are in no doubt at all that he means business! He has thus restored a mysterious side to the Doctor arguably not seen since the mid-Tom Baker era and I pray that he stays longer than the three years he has been hinting at. Although wary at first, I am also pleased to see that Ace is developing quickly into a thoroughly likeable and coherent character, due to the capable abilities of the irresistably likeable Sophie Aldred. Again, after the recent feminine excesses of Mel and Peri, tomboy Ace comes as a breath of fresh air - who could resist smiling at her **"Wimps!"** rebuke at the departing Dalek death squad ?!

As for the story itself, I can safely say I haven't enjoyed a Dalek adventure this much since **Genesis of the Daleks** thirteen years ago! 'Refurbishment of the Daleks' would have been an equally appropriate title, with the intergalactic pepperpots standing proud in their new liveries, and the Black Dalek - purportedly based on the Black Dalek blueprint from **The Daleks' Master Plan** - looking particularly impressive. My only quibble with the Daleks concerned their voices. It was a constant relief when Roy Skelton grated reassuringly but, oh dear, whoever brought Brian Miller's 'constipated' Dalek voice back after **Resurrection of the Daleks** ?! Dramatically acted scenes abounded, and it was good to see everyone - down to the last extra - reacting facially to the events around them - but for me it was the Doctor/Davros confrontation in episode four that reached the height of brilliance in dramatic content: witness the powerful interaction between Sylvester McCoy and Terry Molloy and you will see just what immense talent the series has been harbouring under the guidence of directors less adept than Andrew Morgan who showed his true colours throughout (with the possible exception of Graeme Harper) Terry Molloy delivered his most chillingly awesome performance to date, and while I've always considered his Davros a close second to Michael Wisher's original, here he left me in no doubt that - although this time restricted to just a mask - he is up there with the best of them!

As mentioned, Andrew Morgan's direction glowed throughout, with the exception of some of the Dalek location work, but as he was filming the graveyard scenes at the time he really can't be held responsible for those!

Moving on to **The Happiness Patrol,** which was never originally intended to be shown straight after **Remembrance of the Daleks,** and here we see the contrast between an enthusiastic production team and one which appears to have lost interest by the end of the season (one wonders how they would cope if the series was still on a twenty-six episode a year turnaround!). Despite an appealing script, again a Cartmel-inspired political allegory based, I am in no doubt, on our own Government (in fact Sheila Hancock only agreed to appear on the condition that she could base Helen A on our own Margaret Thatcher!), it sunk beneath a plethora of tacky production values. Indeed, had the production been approached from a serious angle (please note, Mr.Clough!) - and by that I don't include garish costumes and hairdos, school panto-type painted canvas sets, Bertie Bassett, etc. - then the sinister theme that Graeme Curry was trying to underline in the script (that you can't force people to be happy...) would have been brought across all the more effectively. As it stands, it merits alongside its Season Twenty-four contemporaries , or perhaps not taking the again excellent performances of Sylvester and Sophie into account - the only actors involved who appeared to be taking the thing seriously!

Moving swiftly on to the 'official' anniversary story, **Silver Nemesis,** and unfortunately one thing that follows us is Chris Clough's - as ever - sloppy direction, albeit hyphenated on the odd sober occasion with some really quite imaginative shots. One thing he has got right this season is the lighting in both his stories, but unfortunately his shoddy work swamps any of his redeeming qualities. Ultimately the story fails for many other reasons too. As was evident throughout the story should always have been, **at least,** a four-parter, as great chunks of the narrative had to be edited out, some of which were actually integral to the plot (such as a scene introducing the gunmen with the 'walkmans' and the Doctor and Ace's escape from the Queen's premises), and some scene switches as a result resembled all the finesse of a low budget home movie. And what was this great dénouement concerning the Doctor's character that Kevin Clarke so incessantly bragged all year would have a "profound affect" on the series' future (I was hoping for an extension of the mystery following the Doctor's throwaway "And didn't we (Omega and Rasillon) have trouble with the prototype...") remark in **Remembrance of the Daleks**). And **why** did said author keep wandering into the camera ? Is he **that** desperate for fame, I ask myself (with memories of that PanoptiCon incident returning to haunt me...

The story did nothing for the advancement of the Cyber race bar the fact that we learn they have now acquired the ability for sarcasm, but it's reassuring to know that they **still** miss when shooting their weapons, even within arms-length distance of the target! Perhaps worst of all was the script's total lack of originality, not least considering it is a Cyber-remake of **Remembrance of the Daleks** from the **same** season (ie: for Silver Nemesis read Hand Of Omega, for CyberWarships read Dalek battlefleet, for Cyberleader read Dalek Emperor/Davros, for De Flores read Black Dalek, etc., etc.,) - in fact one begins to despair for the sanity of the script editor!

By the way, after the 'daylight' goof in **Remembrance,** did anyone figure out why the Doctor and Ace were often seen sunbathing and listening to an outdoor jazz quartet...at the end of **November** ?! One scene I did like, and I'm probably in a minority here, was that of the TARDIS (nice use of the Doctor's ship in anniversary story, by the way) materialising on the grounds of Windsor Castle from which the Doctor and Ace emerge and promptly join a group of tourists nearby. Like the seat-swapping scene in the lorry in the Dalek story it was absurd, yet acceptable because of the comic-strip style of today's **WHO.** Less acceptable was the materialisation of Lady Peinforte and Richard in the 20th Century café - before the eyes of apparently bemused customers, which took the suspension of disbelief a mite too far. In all a story that promised much, but ultimately failed to deliver the goods as the silver anniversary story.

And so rounds off our résumé of the first twenty-five years of **DOCTOR WHO. The Greatest Show in the Galaxy** will undoubtedly start the next twenty-five years off in Cartmel's 'heavy metal' storytelling style, but it should have retained some of that initial enthusiasm from the start of the season to produce a fairly satisfying result.

For the series as a whole, sadly its future is dependent on the vagaries and whims of a disinterested and unenthusiastic television company, but, in the true tradition of **DOCTOR WHO, anything** can happen...